

A N A P O L O G Y

FOR THE Nonconformists Ministry :

CONTAINING

- I. The REASONS of their PREACHING.
- II. An Answer to the Accusations urged as Reasons for the Silencing of about 2000, by Bishop Morley, Bishop Gutchings Chaplain, Dr. Saywell, Mr. Durel, the nameless Ecclesiastical Politician and Debate-maker, the Counterminer, H. Fowles, Dr. Good, and many others.
- III. Reasons proving it the duty and interest of the Bishops and Conformists to endeavour earnestly their Restoration.

With a POSTSCRIPT upon Oral Debates with Mr. H. Dodwell, against his Reasons for their Silence.

And a Scheme of INTERESTS.

Written in 1668, and 1669, for the most of it, and now Published as an Addition to the Defence against Dr. Scillingfleet, and as an Account to the Silencers of the Reasons of our Practice.

By RICHARD BAXTER.

2 Tim. 4. 1, 2. *I charge thee before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing, and his Kingdom, Preach the Word: Be instant, in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine.*

LONDON, Printed for Thomas Parkhurst, at the Bible and Three Crowns in Cheap-side, near Mercers-Chappel. 1681.

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To the Right Reverend Dr. *Compton*,
Lord Bishop of *London*, Dr. *Barlow*,
Lord Bishop of *Lincoln*, Dr. *Crofts*,
Lord Bishop of *Hereford*, Dr. *Rain-
bow*, Lord Bishop of *Carlisle*, Dr. *Tho-
mas*, Lord Bishop of *St. Davids*,
Dr. *Lloyd*, Lord Bishop of *Peterbo-
rough*, and as many more as are of
their Moderation, and love of our
Common Peace and Concord.

Right Reverend Fathers, and Honourable Lords!

YOU are not the men that resisted and frustrated
our earnest endeavours and hopes of Concord at
his Majesties return 1660, and 1661, nor made
the Act of Uniformity, or the rest by which we
suffer; nor have you been the makers of any Engines to wrack
and tear in pieces the Church and Kingdom, at such a time,
when they groan'd, and beg'd, and hoped for healing. I
therefore direct this Apology to you, and all others of your
moderation, in some hope, though evil men and deceivers
grow worse and worse. You are reputed among us Noncon-
formists, not only true to the Protestant Cause, but lovers
of good men, and no lovers of cruel silencings, violence or
blood: Though I know but few of you, I have reason to
believe this fame; and some of you have publicly declared
your moderation to the world. If then the ancient Chri-
stians

stians might present their Apologies in hope, to Heathen Emperors, may I not do so much more to Christian Bishops, to moderate Bishops, and lovers of peace? If you are wiser and better than we, you are as much more merciful and peaceable than we; and as much more against all hindering the Gospel, and weakening or dividing the Churches of Christ, by unjust silencing, restraining, or persecuting any faithful Ministers or Christians; and you are more sensible than we, with what deep sense men will shortly hear [In as much as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me]. You have then more of the wisdom from above, which is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, &c. Jam. 3. 17. and you have a deeper Impress of that holy LOVE by which all Christs disciples must be known.

Interest is supposed to Rule the World: And the grand design of Satan is to set up some fleshly, sinful interest in Rulers, and Teachers, and People, which is contrary to the Laws and interest of Christ; and then he hath made a Virtual War! Carnal Interest will not yield, and Christ will not yield, nor change his Laws! Carnal interest will expound them for it self, and so secretly and powerfully byas the judgment, that even Learned men, when they warp and err, shall not perceive it, but verily think that it's all for God. We are commonly supposed to be against your interest, and that this will make us continue unreconciled, to the gratifying of them that have no low game to play by the contrived means of our divisions. If your chosen Interest be the furthering of holiness, and everlasting happiness, by sound and serious preaching of Christs Gospel, worshipping God that is a Spirit in spirit and truth, and yet with all reverent decency and order, and living according to the Laws of our Universal Head, in soberness, righteousness, godliness, and in love and peace with one another, God forbid that we should

ould be against your interest. And this is your interest indeed: He that is most for it, we account the best and wisest man. And if your Dignity, Wealth and Honour be your Interest, subordinate to the greater (as it is highest in the ungodly), I beseech you think not we are more even against that, than we are indeed: I had rather be ruled, than rule (but God must be first obeyed): God knows I envy not your dignity or wealth! I have proved in the end of this book, that our Restoration is greatly for your interest; and that none have done more against you than those of your own tribe that have had the greatest hand in our silencing and suffering. Give me but a sober understanding man to deal with, and I undertake to shew him, that by a meer Reforming of the Parish-Churches, so far as your selves confess to be desirable and just (with such a limited Toleration of peaceable sound Christians, as Christian Reason must acknowledge necessary), We may be brought yet to an happy Concord, and a better Reformation than England yet ever saw, without doing the least wrong or hurt to the Diocesans.

It is usually said that England had more respect to the principles of Augustine in Doctrine, and of Melancthon and Bucer in the points of Reformation, than of Calvin, Luther, or any other: And as to Cranmer, Ridley, Cox, and the other Reforming Bishops, I verily believe it. I know no Divines whose judgment I more consent to than Bucers and Melancthons: O that all our Clergy would read and weigh what Bucer saith copiously and vehemently for Parish-Discipline, and pure Communion, de Regno Dei, de Animarum Cura, in censura Liturg, specially de Confirmatione; and what he saith of Pastoral Government, Ordination and Order, and of imposing such Ceremonies as ours (It was written in England, and for England): And that they would read what Melancthon saith in his Epistles

of

of the Pestilent design of the Papists, that would lay the validity of our Ministry and Sacraments on an uninterrupted succession of Canonical, Episcopal Ordination, that they may make the judgment of their Councils more effectual than of Christ and his Spirit in the Scriptures; and what he saith against these cheats.

And verily we have little worldly interest to draw us to be enemies to yours! And I still profess, that in all my experience, those called Nonconformists, did heartily love, honour, praise and bear a Bishop or Conformist that preached and lived seriously, spiritually, and in Christian Love, such as through Gods mercy we have had many; yea if he preached and lived better than Nonconformists, they loved and honoured him more (though with some weak partial persons it was otherwise). If then we have any Interest opposite to yours, it is not Riches, it is not Power; we wist no more than to be Pastors to the Volunteers of a Parish-Church; And what more do the Independents wish, than that persons have the same liberty to chuse to whom the Pastoral care of their Souls shall be entrusted, as they have to chuse Physicians or Schoolmasters, and Tutors for their Children, and Wives or Servants, Husbands or Masters in the family, living under Laws of sobriety and peace? And if you think that our cross interest is the praise of a few that follow us in a reproached, suffering state, you think we have a very low mind and game? Why then do we so much desire to be out of this state, and to take up with reformed Parish-interest? And why doth not a far stronger worldly interest more prevail with us? But such accusations are answered in this book.

As for that party of men among us, Archbishops, Bishops and Doctors, that have made it their office and interest to set up as for Christ, 1. A Catholick Church, formed by a vicarious Universal Government, viz. A General Council, or a feigned Universal Colledge of Bishops; 2. And the Patriarchal

chal power, which was in the Roman Empire ; 3. And the Pope as the President, or Principium unitatis Catholice ; 4. And the same Pope as our Western-Patriarch ; and the six or eight first General Councils as the Laws or Rule of Government ; and so would bring us under a foreign Jurisdiction, and turn the orders of a Catholick Empire into those of the Catholick Church through the World. 6. And that pretend that the Papists Churches have an uninterrupted valid succession, and therefore are true Churches ; and that the Protestant Churches, that have no uninterrupted, Canonical, Episcopall succession, are no true Churches, nor have valid Sacraments, or any ordinary title to salvation ; I say, as for this party of men (whose Writings and Names I need not tell you of), we profess that we have no hope that ever they will be reconciled to us ; because it will not stand with their desired reconciliation (described by themselves) with a more powerful and numerous party which they prefer before us : And though as much as in us lyeth, we must live peaceably with all men, we can never receive their unpeaceable principles and terms. And it much more alienates us against the Church of Rome, to find, that the nearer any are to them, the more they are for uncharitableness and cruelty, and trust not to the Church-Keys, but to the Sword, as if blood, banishment, or destroying conscionable Christians that are not of their minds, were the strength of their Religion and Church ; and still cry, Strike home, and execute the Laws : Abate nothing : Tolerate none of them : Let them make their task, and have no straw : Away with them, as pestilent fellows and movers of seditions, just contrary to the Christian Nature, and Interest, and Law : And if he that dwells in Love, dwells in God, and God in him, who dwells in them that dwell in wrath, and imitate Cain, and bear thorns and thistles, and devour the flocks which they should gather and feed, and shew that they love their brethren by destroying them.

Right

Right Reverend Fathers and Lords! we have far better thoughts and hopes of you, and though I have beg'd in vain these Twenty years for Peace and Concord of others of your Order, I address my self to you, beseeching you patiently to read this Apology; and pardon the earnestness of it, for it is for a weighty cause: It was most written 1668, or 1669, before most of you were Bishops: Dr. Stillingfleet hath newly told us, that [If we will but allow that by virtue of the Rule, Phil. 3. Men are bound to do all things lawful for preserving the peace of the Church, we have no further difference about this matter], pag. 176. We have still allowed it; we have solemnly protested it: Were it lawful to us to conform and cease our Ministry which we were vowed to, we would do it. I beg of you as on my knees, for your own sakes, for Englands, for the Churches, for Christs, that you will agree with us on these terms: I ask nothing of you for my self: I need nothing that you can give me: My time of service is near an end: But England will be England, and Souls and the Churches peace will be precious, and the Cause will be the same, when all the present Nonconformists are dead: And Bishops must dye as well as we: Our Lord delayeth not his coming to encourage any to smite their fellow-servants. If it be not a Lawful thing for the peace of the Church to forbear the dividing Impositions and Prosecutions (I need not name them), then let us all suffer still: But if it be, do not only privately wish, but zealously, as Lovers of the Church endeavour, and that with speed; and all your might, for Peace to abate what may lawfully be abated: It is not in our power to procure Union: For sin and self-condemning will not do it. How much is in yours, the Lord cause you to know and practise. I rest,

Your Servant,

R. B.

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Reader, I have not time to gather the Errata
of the Press.

1. The first part of the report is a general introduction to the subject of the study. It discusses the importance of the study and the objectives of the research.

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[Faint, illegible handwritten notes]

1. The first step is to identify the problem or question that needs to be answered. This involves understanding the context and the specific requirements of the task.

1. The first of these is the fact that the system is not a simple one, but a complex one, involving many different factors and many different people. The second is that the system is not a static one, but a dynamic one, constantly changing and evolving. The third is that the system is not a closed one, but an open one, constantly interacting with the outside world. The fourth is that the system is not a linear one, but a non-linear one, with many feedback loops and many different paths. The fifth is that the system is not a deterministic one, but a probabilistic one, with many uncertainties and many different outcomes. The sixth is that the system is not a simple one, but a complex one, involving many different factors and many different people. The seventh is that the system is not a static one, but a dynamic one, constantly changing and evolving. The eighth is that the system is not a closed one, but an open one, constantly interacting with the outside world. The ninth is that the system is not a linear one, but a non-linear one, with many feedback loops and many different paths. The tenth is that the system is not a deterministic one, but a probabilistic one, with many uncertainties and many different outcomes.

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1. The first step is to identify the problem or question that needs to be answered. This involves understanding the context and the specific requirements of the task.

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AN
A P O L O G Y
 FOR THE
SILENCED MINISTERS,

**Especially for their not ceasing to Preach
 Christs Gospel,**

Being the Third Part of their Plea for Peace.

**Humbly directed to those of the Lord Bishops,
 and to the rest of the Conformable Clergy, of their
 mind, who have procured our Silence and Sufferings,
 or the continuance thereof.**

*Most Reverend, and Right Reverend
 Lords and Fathers, and Reverend
 Brethren,*

HAVING once tryed in vain (though by the
 favour of His Majesties Gracious Encourage-
 ment and Commission) what *speaking* might do;
 and since that tryed, as much in vain, what *si-
 lence* in this kind will do; I have resolv'd once
 more, before the expiring of my gasping hopes,
 to resist despair, and to try whether so many years experi-
 ence hath opened your ears and hearts, to the Reasons and
 humble Requests of those, who not so much for their Sufferings,

as for the Souls of men, do daily eat the bread of sorrow; At least, before I resign this Skeleton to the dust, to leave one more testimony of my zeal for *Unity* and *Peace*, and make one more attempt for the Gospel and the Church of Christ, that I may not appear before my Judge, in the guilt of negligence, cowardize or unprofitableness: Not to be your Accuser, nor a Justifier of any of the weaknesses or miscarriages of the present Nonconformists, nor yet of those of former times; but humbly to remind you of the things that concern the interest of Christ, the people, and your lives.

When it pleased the most Gracious Sovereign of the World, to restore his Majesty, by the concurrence of the desires of his Subjects, and the wonderful dissolution of that Army and Government which resisted his returns; as we knew that our *divisions* had been our *sie* and *ruine*, and our enemies strength, and that our *Concord* now would be our *duty* and our *hope*, and our enemies terror; so we thought that the *season* had happily favoured our just desires. We had all one undoubted Sovereign to unite in: We had all seen and felt the folly and calamity of Dissentions: We had found that principles and practices of jealousy, violence and division had let out our blood, and made havock of our wealth, and separated us from our King, and one another, and brought us all into confusions: We had newly found, that our sudden unanimity and concord had restored the King, and those that suffered for and with him: We knew that almost all the people of the Land were so weary of contention and its effects, that they were melted into an aptness for the mould of unity, and never were more inclined to Concord, even upon any tolerable terms. We knew also that we had a King, who was newly restored by the very first recovery of his peoples unity; and who was even then famous for a loving and a gracious nature, enclined to moderation, quietness and peace: And we had newly seen the many published Declarations of the Nobility and Gentry of the Land, who had suffered most in His Majesties cause, protesting against all future animosities and revenge.

The attempts which we made for the Churches healing upon these encouragements, did quickly meet with gracious acceptance, and yet greater encouragement from the King: And we had no reason to think, that among all the rest, the Clergy should be averse to such a work, or yet should spoil in at such a season for want of skill, because we had on both sides been led in these experiences

that should instruct us, and many nor the least and last, either in the former *sin*, or present *interest*; and our calling and understanding in such things, were supposed such, as should make us Leaders to all the people, in any just attempts for Concord.

When we had humbly craved of his Majesty, that such persons of both sides as he should appoint, might bring in Proposals, containing such *Approaches*, and *Abatements*, and *Accommodations*, as each part could yield unto, without sin against God, and against their consciences; and his Majesty had more than granted our requests, even expressing his Gracious resolution to draw you on to such *Concessions*; we did accordingly give notice to the London-Ministers, that our Concord might be the more extensive, to meet at *Sion-Colledge*, and give in their sense of the necessary means to so good an end. Bishop *Reynolds* and Bishop *Worth*, and some others that Conform, concurred with us in our Proposals: We never spake a word against a Liturgy, nor set-forms of Prayer, nor against the festival Commemorations of the Saints, nor many other things, which many had formerly excepted against; but only desired some emendations of the Liturgy, and that some other forms of Prayer might be added to the several offices, with a Liberty of using *this* or *that*. And for the Government of the Church (which was accounted the matter of greatest difference), we never made *one offer for Presbytery* (That is, the Government of the Church by Classes and Presbyteries constituted of Lay and Clergy-Elders), nor did we ever speak a word for Lay-Elders: Not that we presumed to Censure those Churches that used them: but as many, or most of our selves were never for them; so we knew that *no forms* in which the Churches were known so much to differ, could be the proper terms of Concord: We never made any Proposals against Episcopacy, no not against the Lordships of the Bishops, nor against the greatness of their Revenues, nor their places in Parliament; nor made we any offer of any other way of Discipline, but the *frame* which by Archbishop *Other* had been presented to the late King, called, *The Reduction of Episcopacy*, &c. In which he thought that he had hit upon the ancient Primitive Government, by Bishops, with their Clergy-Presbyters as their Colledge. Not that we approved all the forementioned things which we passed by, but that we knew we must yield for the Churches peace, as far as we could do without committing sin our selves.

When we presented to His Majesty these our Proposals and Requests, and expected to meet with the like *Concessions* and *Approaches* of our Brethren (not yet made Bishops), we met with his Majesties Gracious acceptance, but our expectations failed of all the rest; having never received any such thing from that day unto this. But we shortly after received a sharp Answer to our Proposals; to which when a Reply was drawn up, we purposely cast it by, lest turning the work of Pacification into a dispute, should frustrate it by exasperating altercations.

But when we that should have been the forwardest to Peace, could do no more to an Agreement among our selves, his Majesty was pleased to do more, and published his Gracious Declaration concerning Ecclesiastical Affairs; In which, though he granted us not Archbishop *Ushers* Model of Episcopacy, nor all that we desired, yet granted he so much as made us thankfully rejoyce, in hope to have seen the Churches unity and peace: Because we thought the terms were such, as to which we could without any guilt of sin, or check of conscience, have laid out our selves, in perswading all our Brethren to conform. And accordingly the *London* Ministers did presently draw a Thanksgiving to his Majesty (yea, the Commons House of Parliament themselves did thank him). There was nothing now remaining for the confirmation of our hopes, but the intended Alterations of the Liturgy, and the Confirmation of his Majesties Gracious Concessions. When we had a Commission from his Majesty to attempt the first, we hoped to do it by mutual compliances in gentle and amicable Conference: But it was resolved to us, that we being the Plaintiffs, must bring in a draught of all the Alterations of the Liturgy which we desired, and also of those Additional forms which we had proposed as an expedient for Concord. Upon this some of our Brethren would have insisted on a refusal, believing that it would but spin out time, and end in nothing which would attain that Concord which was our end: But others perswading them rather to do as was imposed on us, than to go no further; because at the worst, our case would in writing be less lyable to misreports, than if we had only spoken for our selves, perhaps under checks, in temptations and restraints (For we had heard many wish, that the Conference at *Hampton-Court*, in King *James* his time, had been by writing). Hereupon we ventured on the imposed task: We brought in writing some exceptions against some passages in the Liturgy. To this

we afterward received an Answer. To which we offered to you a Reply, and with it the Additions to the Liturgy which we desired. And foreseeing the danger of the confusions and sins, which since have followed our Divisions, we did so far supererogate, as to present to you a long and earnest Petition for Unity and Peace: And we agreed with you (as foreseeing the inconveniences of mens uncertain and venturous reports) that nothing should be charged on either part as their assertions, which was not by them given in in writing. After this we received not one line of Answer from you, either to our Reply, or to our Additions; wondering above all, that (when it had been said so usually by others, that we could agree to find fault with the old, but could never agree of any other in its stead) we should never hear (from men, supposed not unwilling) one charge against the Matter, Phrase or Method, to this day! Our last three days being spent in hopeless disputation, I have nothing to say to (because of our forementioned agreement) but this; That when it had fallen to my lot to speak much, and consequently to displease much, I was since charged in Print with the unsoundness of somewhat there delivered, about commanding things evil by accident; which I never publicly answered to this day, lest I should seem to blow the fire, which all good men desire should be quenched: But the very words of the Dispute it self were printed, (being not half a sheet of Paper) than which I thought there needed no more, to satisfy any living man of the truth, that would but use sound eyes and reason. And since that case is opened in a Discourse of Scandal in the second *Plaa for Peace*.

I have recited this much principally to mind you of these few things: 1. That we were not the last in seeking Reconciliation, Unity and Peace. 2. That we are the more excusable if we are not changed in our judgment, because you never Answered our three last Writings given in. (We have since indeed seen two Volumes, which are against two particular passages: The one by a nameless Author, who would have no Prayers in the Pulpit, but the Liturgy, or imposed forms: but most of the Conformists practise the contrary to this day, and therefore we need not write to confute him. The other, to prove that *Lent* should be kept, not only on a Civil, but Religious account, and the antiquity thereof; of which Dr. *Moss* in his *Mystery of Iniquity*, Bishop *Taylor*, and other Conformists, have spoken so well, that we need to say nothing, especially in a case which we take to be of no great moment to us,

while

while each man hath the liberty of his secret thoughts, and may observe it on what account he please. But had it been of moment, we had told the Author that he lost his labour in proving the antiquity of one, or three, or few days fast, when the question was only of the antiquity of the forty days (of which *Daille* hath given a full account.)

3. That our displeasing-importunity to have prevented the silencing of so many Ministers, was not without cause; and that we spake not falsely when we so oft foretold you, on how many of the Clergy and Laity the storm would fall, and that it would not assuage, but much increase the divisions which all good men lamented.

4. That we never yet had opportunity to give you or the world our Reasons against the *New Conformity*, it being only the *Old* before the *New* was made, which we were then allowed to debate. So that as the *Presbyterians* on one side, may say that *their cause was never yet publicly pleaded (by us)*; so may those on the other side, who could have yielded to the old Conformity, but cannot to the new.

Since that time instead of *Abasements* and *Approaches* for *Accommodation* and concord, Conformity is made very much more difficult to us than it was before; which we speak not to accuse you, much less the makers of the Law; but to lament the unhappiness of this distracted and distressed Land, and partly to excuse our selves. Several men have several interests and apprehensions of things; and the judgments which God will have executed upon a sinful people must come to pass, though he will not be the author of any of the sin of them that execute them.

The Conformity of the Laity is made an hundred-fold more difficult by the Corporation-Oath and Declaration, and by the Vestry Act, &c. (yet have we lately read the writings with pity and admiration, who blush not to tell the world that the *Laity* or *People* are not put upon the renouncing of the *Covenant*. But thus it will be where *Love* and *Unity* are oppugned and destroyed by those that praise them.

The Conformity of the Clergy is made much more difficult than before: 1. By the new Subscription. 2. By the new Declaration. 3. By Reordination. 4. By the new additions to the Liturgy, especially the Doctrine of the Salvation of Baptized Infants, without distinguishing of them that are Baptized, *jure vel injuria*, with right or without. And the old Conformity is yet too hard for us,

in the *Subscription*, and in the *Oath* of obedience to the *Diocessans*, and in other points. All which again we speak not to reflect on our Superiours, whose Honour we desire to maintain; but to make known our case, and the reasons of our practice.

Now these seventeen years we have patiently waited on Gods Providence, in silence as to the pleading of our cause; so that I know not that ever there was so much as one Petition either for us, or by us, offered to the Parliament. And when a multitude of Books have been written against us, of such a nature and tendency as I will not denominate or describe (it is the policy of some to do things so bad, that no sufferer or dissenter can so much as name them without the imputation of railing or reviling, by the use of such abominable words. But the day is near that will set all strait) it hath moved me many time to pity, to read such Books as I have seen written for Conformity, to think how easie it was to answer them, and *pro capite lectoris*, what lamentable reasonings go for current with some men? We have been silent whilest Volume after Volume hath been published against us; some disputing, and some reproaching: and if any impatient Nonconformists have been moved to dispute the Cause, it hath been mostly such of the weaker sort, who have done it without their brethren knowledg, and have done the Cause more wrong than right. (And who can expect that so many hundreds should be so many years silenced, accused, and writ against in such a manner, and that none of them should be so weak and impatient as to speak for himself according to his ability; and they that at such a time had not wisdom enough to hold their tongues, could not be expected to have wisdom enough to speak.)

For my own part I must profess, that the principal reason that caused my silence, as to such disputes was the fear of injuring the Church. For as I have heard that old Mr. Dod was wont to thank God that so many conformed for the sake of truth; and to thank God that so many conformed for the sake of the Gospel which they preached: So it was my judgment, that it was not my duty without a special call, to perswade any man to Nonconformity, when it was but in the issue to perswade him to be silenced, and to deprive the Church of his publick labours. Therefore did I never (to my remembrance) endeavour to make any one man a Nonconformist that did not come or send to me for resolution in the case. And some such also I put off, as far as conscionably I could. Though
I may

I may never perswade a man to that which I judge to be sin, yet I am not always bound to dissuade him from it. If I saw a man about to tell a lye, or take a false oath, to save the life of the King from an enemy or traytor, I do not think that it is my duty to hinder him. Affirmatives bind not *ad semper*. I thank God, not that so many laudable Ministers conform, but that they preach the Gospel, and keep up so much of the interest of the Church and Religion in the Land. I have met with some women and hot-brain'd lads, of another mind, that said, *Let them put upon us the veriest ignorant sets and drunkards, we shall be the more safely justified for not going to their Churches.* But I ever reprov'd this, as the language of the Serpent, who insinuating into the injudicious, would increase the sin and misery of the world. For my own part I heard all Ministers where I lived, who were but tollerable in the Sacred Office, I came to the beginning of the Churches Prayers, when I could, and staid to the end. I took not my self for a constrained unwilling *bearer* of them; but the more any external imperfection made my devotion difficult, the more I thought it my duty to labour, to stir up my affections, lest I should as the hypocrite, draw near to God with my lips without my heart. I remember what was said of Old Mr. *Fenne*, the famous *Coventry* Nonconformist, that he would say, *Amen*, loudly to every one of the Common-Prayers, except that for the *Bishops*, by which he thought he sufficiently expressed his dissent. I know how unable the old Separatists were to answer the many Arguments of the famous *Arthur Hildersham*, *John Pager*, *William Bradshaw*, *Brightman*, *John Ball*, and other old Nonconformists, for the lawfulness of Communicating with our Parish-Churches in the Sacraments, and the Liturgy. I was exceedingly moved against Separation (truly so called) by considering, 1. How contrary it is to the principle of Christian love. 2. And how directly and certainly pernicious to the interest and cause of Christ, and of his Church, and of the souls of men, and how powerful a means it is to kill that little love that is left in the world. 3. And how plainly it proceedeth from the same spirit that persecution doth. For though their expressions be various, their minds and principles are much the same; which is to vilifie our Brethren, and represent them as odious and intolerable, and overlook that of Christ which is amiable in them. In which when they have agreed, as Children of the same Father, they differ in their way of serving him. One saith, He is such and such

sch, therefore away with him, silence him, imprison him, banish him: The other saith, 'He is such and such a one, therefore away with him, have no communion with him. *He that eateth not*, Rom. 14. will say, Away with him because he eateth: And he that *eateth* will say, Away with him because he eateth not. Both agree in murdering love, and accounting their brother *unlovely* and *intolerable*. 4. And I was greatly moved in thinking of the state of most of the Churches in the world; if I travelled in *Abassia*, *Armenia*, *Russia*, or among the *Greek* Churches, I durst not deny to hold communion with them. When I go to God in prayer, I dare not go in a separate capacity, but as a member of the Universal Church, nor would I part with my share in the Common-prayers of all the Churches, for all the world; but am joined with them in spirit, while I am corporally absent, owning all their holy prayers, though none of their faults or failings in them, (having many in all my own prayers to God, which I must be further from justifying than other mens.) And having perused all the foreign and ancient Liturgies extant in the *Bibliotheca Patrum*, I doubt not but our own is incomparably better than any that is there.

But I will not conceal it from you, that I am not such a Separatist neither, as to communicate with Parish-Churches only. If only the Law have turned any Pastors out of the Parishes, and the people and they still hold their relation and communion (not to say now whether they do well or ill), I will no more separate from them than from you. I communicate with you in Liturgy and Sacrament, but neither as with a *Sett* or *Faction*, nor as the *whole Church*; but only as a *part* of the Church Universal, and so are they. I will hear you, and I will hear them when I have a just occasion. I will communicate with you, and I will communicate with them, as I perceive a call. If each side run away from the other, I will run from neither, though I will sin with neither, and *must* go from them that *drive* me away.

But I tell all that ask my mind, that I am not so indifferent as to the *Ministers* whom I must join with, as I am to the *forms and modes* of Worship: Not that I call their actions *Nullities*, or say that the Sacraments are *invalid* which they administer. (For their usurpation cannot rob the innocent of their right.) But yet I will not be guilty of countenancing and encouraging any soul-murderer in so great a sin.

Three sorts of Teachers I renounce Communion with (as Ministers.) 1. Those that through intolerable ignorance and insufficiency, do want those abilities which are necessary to the essence of the Ministry. 2. Those Hereticks who preach against any essential article of Religion. 3. Those *wicked* ones who openly bend their *application* (not against different Sects and adversaries, for that is common to all the factious and peevish, but) against the *serious practise of Godliness, Temperance, Love or Justice*; and that labour to make these odious to their hearers, though their Doctrine be sound, from which they raise these malignant applications. These are the men that I will not communicate with.

I confess when I read in *Sulpitius Severus* the History of St. *Martin* resolved Separation from *Ithacius, Idacius*, and the Synods of Bishops of those times, and the confirmation of him by Visions, and the antiquity and credibility of that History (if of almost any ancient Church History in the main), and the stupendious miracles which he is said to work, it a little stagger'd me, till I considered, 1. That Scripture only is our rule: And, 2. That it was not from the *Episcopal Order* that he separated (for he was one himself) nor from any particular Bishops that were *innocent*, nor yet from the *Churches of the people* in their Communion and Worship; but only from a *prevailing company and Synod* of the Bishops that were guilty of *cruelty*, and of bringing reproach upon the serious practisers of Godliness in those times.

And as for the many Volumes which have been written against my self, I thought it not necessary to confute them, nor reasonable to stand upon a Personal Vindication, when I knew it would exasperate the accusers (to be accounted injurious and false) and would increase the breach.

Yea, when it was judged against me, that my presence would be injurious to the people that I had long preached to, and that my absence would more conduce to their Conformity, and that they were none of my Charge, I so far denied my self and them, as that I never since came near them; nor, unless very rarely, sent them one line: Though I thought if I had been allowed so much, it might have better answered the ends of those that were most for my removal. Yet did I not take this for any perfidious forsaking them, when upon many accounts I believed it to be for their good, and I sent them all the Books which I wrote.

If any think that I should not say so much of my self, in an Apology

ogy for others, I answer, 1. It is because that men will needs have it so whether I will or not. I say not a word to them; and yet what a multitude of Volumes have these seven years and more been tossing my Name as a football of reproach about the land? And when the cause is pleaded, they presently let fly at the *persons*, and say what you can, it's there that they will stick; and till they are answered there, they think they are unanswered. 2. And because I am best acquainted with my self, and can speak with more certainty of my own case and reasons, than of any others. 3 But chiefly because as our late *Tilennus* hath stiled me, *Purus patus Puritanus*, so the late *Episcopal Indignation* published me the *Antesignanus of the Presbyterians*. I deserve not so much honour. But hence the world and posterity may know, that whereas but a few years ago, a *Puritan* was one that was against Bishops and Ceremonies, and Liturgy, and a *Presbyterian* was one that was for Lay-Elders, and the power of Classes composed partly of such, not only for concord, but as Governours of all the particular Churches; now in *England*, a *Puritan* is one that is no more against, and as much for Archbishops, Bishops, Liturgy and Ceremonies, as in my Books I have long published my self to be. And a *Puritan* as a *Puritan* is no worse a person than I am, (whose life and writings have had the happiness to have some share in their commendations) And a *Presbyterian* now is one that is against Lay-Elders, and in his judgment against the Regimental power of Classes and Synods as over the Pastors of the particular Churches, and only for their consultation and their use to concord; and one that is, as aforesaid, for Archbishops, Bishops, &c. as far as in my dispute for Church-Government I have declared my self to be. It is of some use to know the mutability of the world, and what a *purus patus Puritanus*, and a *Presbyterian* now is.

But having thus far related the History of our true endeavours for peace; it must be my next task to Apologize for our supposed unpeaceableness. And I cannot better know what is the matter of offence, than by knowing what is charged on my self. He that was one of the first restrained from Preaching, and hath been laid in the Goal as I have been, will be supposed to be one of the most guilty. And therefore I may hope that they that have escaped better, have deserved less; and that my own defence will be also theirs. And I owe the offended an account of the practise by which I have so much offended them.

All this was
written
1669.

When the Act of Uniformity was not yet made, or talk of it went to the now Archbishop of *Canterbury*, then Bishop of *London*, (even whilst the Kings Declaration gave us liberty), and desired his License to preach in his Diocess, which he was pleased to grant me, upon my Voluntary subscription to the Doctrine of the Church, and those terms of peaceableness which he accepted. When the said Act of Uniformity was *in fieri*, I ceased that seeming Lecture which I had, before 1st of *May* 1662. When that Act came out, it forbad all to hold any Benefice, Cure, Lecture, &c. who had possession of any Ecclesiastical Promotion the 1st of *May* 1662, and did not subscribe and declare as required of them in that Act, and also forbad the reception of any into such Promotion or Cure for the future, that should not so subscribe and declare. Neither of these being my case, (for I was out of all before *May* 1st 1662, and I sought no new Cure or Benefice), the Law did no more require me to subscribe and declare, than it did the Bishops, or any conformable man that for so long had Cure, Promotion, or stated employment. So that I was no Nonconformist in the sense of the Law, because I conformed as far as the Act required me to conform. And that Act not forbidding occasional Sermons to any but those that were not Licensed, my License enabled me to Preach occasionally (as many that had no places did), yet because I knew that the Bishop might revoke my License at his pleasure, and that if I so far used it, being reputed a Nonconformist, it would give offence to my superiors, I never since made use of it to this day, nor ever Preached a publick Sermon. And though the Act forbad me not publick Catechising, or the Administration of the Sacraments, I never did either, to avoid offence. And when about three years after, the *Oxford* Act came forth for the restraining Nonconformists from coming within five miles of a Corporation, or of any place where they had been Teachers, or kept a Conventicle, I found that I was not concerned in that Act, because by Law I was no Nonconformist, to whom the Act by the very title and matter was limited. So that being neither a Nonconformist by Law, nor my License to preach occasionally ever nulled, nor yet concerned in this *Oxford* Act, which imposeth the new Oath, I supposed my peace not endangered by the Law; (which the Lawyers whom I consulted also did conclude.) Yet did I forbear to come within five miles of a Corporation, except on the rode, to avoid offence. All this while I lived in a place
r^hers

where few desired me to preach; they being poor and worldly people, that minded most their labours and necessities. So that I contented my self to instruct my family, with three or four more that sometimes desired to be present. But the chief reason why I did no more was, because (as none called me to it, so) I was engaged in certain writings, (*A Body of Practical Divinity, the Reasons of the Christian Religion, and others*), which I thought of greater use to the Church than Preaching to any there would be, and therefore would do nothing which might hinder or interrupt them. But when first the lamentable Plague had awakened those that were left alive to look more seriously towards Eternity, and then the lamentable Fire had consumed so much of the Wealth and Glory of the Land (of which we were the sad spectators); and when these awakenings, and the consequent necessities of the City, had caused many Ministers to resolve to preach the Gospel to the survivors, what ever they underwent; the poor people of the Parish (of *Acton*) where I lived, came crowding into my House while I taught my Family; and since once they began, they would not cease. And verily I had neither a heart to shut the doors against them, nor wit enough to justify it, if I had done it. I never invited one; and when they came I knew no reason to forbid them. They were not Sectaries, nor Seditious, but poor people that needed to be taught the Principles of Religion. There was not two or three in all the Parish that I knew of that did separate from the publick Assembly, yea or the Liturgy. They went with me into the Church, which was before my door. I Preached not at the time of publick Exercise. I thought this course did tend to union, and not to division. I freely taught them the evil of Separation and Sedition. And whereas the multitude of hearers was an offence, I was glad that such a multitude did relish, or could bear such Doctrine. The last Sermon I preached to them was on *Mat. 5. Blessed are the meek, &c.* whence (after *Dr. Hammond*) I shewed them how much meekness and patience conduceth even to peace on earth, and what sedition, rebellion, passion and intemperance doth against it. They say, there were some witnesses present that after did accuse me, that I know not; but that week by a Warrant I was brought before two of his Majesties Justices of the Peace, and offered the *Oxford Oath*, and sent to the Goal, as by the *Mittimus* was expressed, for Preaching in my House, which they called a Conventicle, and for not taking the Oath. The persons, manner, circumstances

statutes, nor my deliverance by the Honourable and Righteous Judges (the Glory of his Majesties Government, subordinate to himself), I have no mind nor cause now to meddle with; having said as much as is needful to open the true nature of our supposed crimes.

And now you see that it is *Preaching* that is so much of our offence, (and coming within five miles of a Corporation, &c.) I shall here fix, and tell you, 1. What is really our judgment in the case, whether such prohibited Ministers may preach. 2. What are our Reasons. 3. What Reasons you have to be for our Preaching rather than against it. 4. How vain the common arguments against it are. And, 5. I shall venture to shut up the Premises, with an humble Petition to you, once more for the Church and the souls of men, and for the interest of unity, love and peace.

1. **W**E do hold that the Sacred Office of the Ministry consisteth in an *obligation* to do the *work*, and *authority* to warrant us therein. And that both these are essential to the office.

2. That God doth not call men now immediately as the Prophets and Apostles were; but giving them necessary qualifications, doth commit it to the Ministry of men, first to discern and judge of those qualifications, and then by a solemn Investiture to put them in possession of the office; which is called *Ordination*, and is ordinarily necessary for order sake.

3. That yet the office it self is of Gods own institution; and from that Institution the *Authority* and *Obligation* resulteth directly to the persons lawfully ordained. So that *God only* giveth the *office* or *power*, though not without the *act* of man to fit the person to receive it, and then Ministerially by Investiture to deliver possession. It is not *without* man, but it is not *of* or *from* man, as the possessor of the *power* given, but only as a servant to give possession in the name of Christ. Even as men first chose (by the preparation and direction of Gods Providence) the line or family that should reign: But God only giveth the King his power. Or as the members of a Corporation may chuse their Mayor, and the Steward or Recorder may solemnly give him possession; but his *power it self* is immediately from the *Charter* of the King.

4. That though we be not called as the Apostles, yet when we are called, we are bound to fidelity as well as they were.

5. That it is not an office to be taken up on trial, and for a limited

mitted time, (as servants are bound to their masters by the year); but as *Marriage*, is for life (unless God shall disable us), and as we say for better and for worse; and not to be laid by at pleasure. And therefore those Schoolmen that interpret the *Indelible character* of the Relation seem not to differ from us at all;

6. That though *Ordination* be not, as the two Sacraments of the Covenant of Grace, and necessary to Salvation, nor generally to all the people; yet may it not unfitly be called, the *Sacrament of Orders*, or of our *Ministerial Covenant* with Christ, as a Soldiers Oath and Engagement was *Sacramentum Militare*.

7. That Kings and other Magistrates are not by *Ordination* to give this office, nor by *Degradation* to take it away.

8. But that Ministers are under the Government of the King, as well as Physicians, or any other subjects. And that he may use the sword to force them to the due performance of their office, and to hinder them from abusing it, to the mischief of the Church.

9. That this power is for the ends of the Ministry, which is for edification and the publick good. And therefore that the end is self is not put into the power of man (whether the Church shall be edified and happy, or not) nor yet the office of the Ministry itself (whether there shall be a Ministry or not) Nor the necessary work of that office, (whether the Ministry when necessary shall be exercised or not.)

10. We believe that those that ordain a *Minister*, cannot degrade him at their pleasure. As he that may baptize a child cannot unbaptize him again at pleasure; nor he that marrieth persons unmarried them.

11. Much less can every Bishop degrade at pleasure those whom other men ordained. Else every Minister might be degraded while there are so many disagreeing and angry Bishops in the world.

12. If the Magistrate forbid us to preach the Gospel, either our Preaching is *necessary* or *unnecessary*, and this is either *notorious* or *doubtful*. If our Preaching be *notoriously unnecessary*, we will obey him and forbear. If it be a *doubtful case* to us, we will use all the means which God hath appointed us to know the certain truth. And if yet it be *doubtful*; and our minds in suspence, we will stand to the judgment of the Magistrate and forbear. But if our Ministry be *notoriously and undoubtedly necessary* to the just ends, which is the edification of mens souls, we will obey God in Preaching as far as we are able, and humbly and patiently bear what is laid upon us by our Rulers.

13. But in this case we will not intrude into the publick Temple, much less lay any claim to the Tythes or publick maintenance, for these are all at the Kings disposal.

14. Nor do we take our selves bound by Christ to one place, or one time or manner of teaching, or to speak always to a great Assembly. But all these are circumstances which we must fit to the *end* and *success* of our work. And must take that course, and with that variation which tendeth to the Churches good. Christ, that bid his Apostles when they were persecuted in one City, fly to another, alloweth us to be where we may serve him best. If forbearing all Preaching for some days or weeks, would tend to the Churches good, (as by procuring us liberty afterward, &c.) it is lawful to forbear. If Preaching often to a few be more for the Churches good than to preach but once or twice to many, we may then lawfully chuse the smaller number. So that in such circumstances; that may be one mans duty which is anothers sin.

15. We take it to be our duty in all such Preaching to take heed of any thing that tendeth to the division of the peoples minds, or to the hinderance of the lawful publick Ministry, or to their just discouragement. But contrarily to concur and live with such Ministers (*If possible, and as much as in us lieth*, Rom. 12. 18.) in peace and mutual love; and to do all that we can to promote their reputation with the people; and to work all unjust prejudice and partiality out of their minds. And not only to draw them to a due attendance in the publick Assemblies, but also as far as reason will allow us, to prefer still the publick Ministers labours, honour, and interest in the people, before our own; and to reprove all censorious whispers and obloquy which we shall hear against them behind their backs.

16. And as for maintenance, we expect not any; unless any Minister be so poor, as for food and raiment, and the necessities of life, to live upon the alms of others, (which is the case of very many.) In which case we hold it our duty not at all to be chargeable to censorious murmuring dissenters, but only to the willing; and that if God shall humble us to the begging of our bread, we should not be so proud as to disdain it, or to murmur at his Providence, nor yet so selfish as to forsake and change our calling, because we have no better maintenance. But rather be thankful that we are kept from the temptations of grandure and sulness, by which we see so many ruined, and so great a part of the Clergy through-

throughout the Christian world to be beguiled and drowned in those ways of idleness, sensuality, cruelty and contention, which prove the division, the defilement and the dishonour of the Church. For as we believe a life to come, and that the preferring of the pleasures of this world before it, is the thing that keepeth men from Heaven, and is the common cause of mens damnation; so we believe that no condition doth so much tempt men into this damning love of the world, as that wherein the world is made most pleasing and most lovely to them: And he that aboundeth in it with wealth and honour is liker of the two to overlove it, than he that meeteth with labour, poverty and reproach. Yet will we not as begging Friars, renounce Propriety, nor cast away any talent which our Master giveth us to improve; nor yet be so impudent as to be unnecessarily burdensome, or lose our liberty by making our selves beholding and dependent; but we take it to be our part to labour faithfully in our work, and leave it to God what provisions he will allow us. And those of us that want not, but have to spare, to contribute to the relief of them that want. And we may be the more patient while we remember in how much purity the Primitive Churches were kept in their poverty and low estate; as also the Churches of the poor *Waldenses*, and those in *Piedmont* to this day; and the [*Hodie venenum, &c.*] the corruptions, divisions and calamities that have followed the worldly exaltation of the Clergy both in East and West. Therefore we humbly submit to his gracious Providence, that thus saveth us from the love of the world, so inconsistent with the love of God, 1 Joh. 2. 15

17. We take it also to be our duty, the greater our restraints and sufferings are, the more to take heed lest any dishonour or murmuring at our Rulers, should thence arise and be cherished in our hearers minds; which though it be not absolutely in our power to cure, we must do our best. It is a humane thing to pity the sufferers. And if our Doctrine and our lives do make the people think well of us, they are so much the readier to think ill of those by whom we suffer. Which those well perceive who have the sight that their interest made it necessary to make us odious by voluminous reproaches. But that is not the way with any but strangers. For when those that know us, know that we are slandered, it doth but increase their dislike of the reproachers. And they can read our lives as easily as the revilers books. The only way to change

their opinion of us ~~will~~ for us to change our *Doctrine* and our *lives*, and to *preach ill*, and *live ill*. But that is a way that we must not take, to gratifie any that would build their ends and honour on our contempt. But yet the honour of our Rulers must be more precious to us than our own. For it is more necessary to the common good. And therefore we take it for our duty, not to blazon and aggravate our sufferings too much in the hearing of the people; much less to accuse our Rulers of them; but to take to our selves the blame of all, as far as is true, and to confess (which is the truth) that it is for our own and the peoples sins; we should have laboured harder while it was day, as foreseeing the night when none can work, *Joh. 9.* And the people should not have forfeited their food by fulness and neglect. And alas! how many sins of theirs and ours have had a hand in this calamity? We take it to be our duty, if we hear any speak a dishonouring word against the Powers which God hath set over us, to reprove them, and better instruct them in their duty, and to warn them that they make not any of their love or pity to us, an occasion of their sin. And to remember them how much the common good and all our peace is beholden to Magistracy, notwithstanding the sufferings of particular men.

18. And we take it also for our duty, to pray for the King, and all in Authority, not with dishonouring intimations, but in such a manner as becometh us to speak even to God (in the hearing of men) of his own Officers; and not that their favour may make us rich and great, but only that we may live a *quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty*; 1 Tim. 2. 12. And this not seldom nor formally, but daily and earnestly. And we take it for our duty to preach against schism, sedition and rebellion, and all principles which tend to breed or feed them; and to use our opportunities and interest in the people, to promote their loyalty and the publick peace.

19. Also we judge it our duty to preach those plain and necessary things which the salvation of men doth most depend on, and the people generally have most need to hear; that is, the opening to them their Baptismal Covenant, and the Articles of the Creed, the Lords Prayer, the Decalogue and the Gospel-precepts; or more briefly the Doctrine of faith in Christ, and repentance towards God, and of the love of God and man; to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this world, as looking and hoping for a
better,

better, *Tu. 2. 12.* And not to fill the peoples heads with needless controversies, or vain jangling, or contending about words which edifie not, but subvert the hearers; much less to perplex them with talking of the unrevealed Counsels of God; nor yet to corrupt their minds by talking against our Superiors, or against dissenters behind their backs, or by aggravating the faults of other mens manner of worshipping God, or breeding in them distaste of the publick Worship; or talking against Bishops, or Ceremonies, or Liturgy; nor by representing any sort of Christians who differ from us in points not fundamental, as odious to the hearers; whether *Lutherans, Calvinists, Arminians, Episcopal, Presbyterian, Independent, yea or Anabaptists*; no, nor to injure the *Papists* themselves, by making our differences seem greater than indeed they are. Our office is to preach up love, and not to preach it down and mortifie it, which all those do, whatever they pretend, that attempt to represent their brethren as odious, and to hide or deny, or extenuate that in them which is good and amiable.

20. Lastly, we must profess therefore, that though we take not our selves bound to prefer our Preaching before other mens, nor to tie our selves just to numbers and circumstances of time and place, nor to draw a party from the lawful publick Ministers to our selves, nor to *preach at all* where there is not a *real and notorious need*; yet do we take our selves bound on pain of Gods displeasure, and of damnation, to exercise our Ministerial office as we are able in a pious, peaceable and loyal manner, as poor assistants to those faithful Ministers that have publick allowance and encouragement, notwithstanding any present prohibitions or unwillingness of those that are against it. And if this profession shall teach any to conclude that therefore bonds, imprisonment or banishment must restrain us, the will of the Lord be done; we are ready not only to be bound but to die, for preaching the Gospel of him that died for us, and seeking to save men from a foreer death. And we ought not to account our lives as dear to us, so that we may finish our course with joy, and the Ministry committed to us by the Lord, *Act. 20. 24.* But we ought to suffer without resisting or reviling; which we may the easier do, while we suffer not as evil doers, but for preaching the Gospel of Salvation, and teaching men to seek the happiness to come, and to forsake their lusts, and to love and obey their God and Saviour.

As we are the more unwilling that the Church should be burdened with unnecessary Ceremonies, because if they be used with understanding, the people must be *taught* their sense and use; which we scarce have leisure for, or pleasure in, while they are ignorant of so many greater things, and are so very dull of hearing; so it is not a little of our peace, that if we suffer, we be not found Preaching about Ceremonies or shadows, but Preaching that Gospel, which at our Ordination we solemnly promised to preach.

And now having told you truly our Principles, I shall next tell you the reasons why we cannot forbear our Ministerial work, till bonds or disability constrain us to forbear it.

II. **A**ND here we shall not form Syllogisms in such an Apology, as if we were speaking to captious men; but nakedly open our reasons as to those that are as much concern'd in the matter as we; and should be as willing to know the truth.

We take it to be *Sacriledg*, and that of the highest nature, except Apostasy it self, to alienate our selves from the work to which we are consecrated and devoted. By how much the *nearer* any consecrated person or thing is to God, and by how much the more useful to his ends (his glory in the good of souls) by so much the greater sacriledg it is to alienate that which is so consecrated: (With you we know that we need not dispute either the name of a *Sacrament* or *Orders* (for we stick not upon names) nor the obligation.) You know the usual Exposition of the Answer in the Church-Catechism, to the Question, [*How many Sacraments, &c.*] *A. Two only, as generally necessary to Salvation.* We differ not from you in our sense of this. Your Canons enquire after all such as alienate themselves from the Ministry to which they were ordained, and turn to any other calling. We dislike not that Canon: But we wish our observance of it might be thought but a pardonable fault.

It hath possessed me oft with admiration to see the blinding power of Partiality in some men, that can see the evil of *Sacriledg* in them that alienate *Church lands, and Goods, and Houses, and Utensils*, and can see no evil in the alienation of *consecrated persons*? What are the *Cups*, and *Fonts*, and *Tables* for, (do they praise the glorious mystery of Redemption?) Are they not his *Utensils* who

who is set apart to attend the Altar, and to commemorate the sacrifice of the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world? What are the *Houses* for, but for the convenient habitation of the Pastors? What are the *Lands and Tythes* for, but for *their maintenance* while they do the work of God? What are the *Temples* for, but to be the convenient places of their and the peoples worshipping of God? Is it a crime to steal the feathers, and none to steal the goose? Is it a crime to rent your clothes, and is it none to rend your flesh? Or to steal a tile, or pick a lock, and not to burn the house? Is he faulty that robs your child of his hat, or book, or victuals? and is he innocent that killeth him, or that robs you of your child? We must bespeak all *Cainnites* here, who like leeches thirst for blood, that they distort not these words, as speaking all this of the Law makers, or any of our Rulers.

We meddle with no mens duties and faults here but our own. We leave all others to look to themselves, as they must shortly answer for themselves. We only say, that if *we should alienate our selves* from that Sacred office to which we are consecrated and devoted, it would be odious and accursed Sacriledg in us. And if really it prove to be our own doing, that we are thus alienated, it will be no light or little fault. And if God have forced the world to observe that even *Impropriators*, much more gross sacrilegious persons are usually ruined before the fourth generation, what might we expect if we should do much worse.

I have read and heard their words of late, who would make the late *Westminster* Assembly favourers of Sacriledg, forsooth because the Annotations (not put out by the Assembly) speak not against Sacriledg (which they do expressly speak against); especially on those Texts in the New Testaments, on which *Dr. Featly* an Episcopal Divine its said was the Author of them. O the candor and impartiality of this age? For my part, I was none of the Assembly (being then too young and too unworthy): But Mr. *Vines's* judgment and mine against the alienation of Church-lands in those times as sacrilegious; I published in our Letters in the end of my *Confession*, how displeasing soever it was to them that then bore sway. But all's one for that. It is for the interest of some men to say what they have said, and as they have said it. O that they better understood their own interest!

If it be said, that while we refuse conformity, we alienate our selves, whilst we would avoid it, in that we give Rulers cause to do it; that is to be spoken to by it self anon.

And

And if it be said that our forbearing the work of our Ministry is not sacrilegious, when we do it in obedience to our Rulers, that also is to be answered afterward.

If there be no Law extant which can disoblige us from our undertaken office and work, then if we forbear we are sacrilegious Villains, and lyable to the curse and doom of the unprofitable servant that hid his talent; *Mat. 25.* Forgive us if we had rather venture on the clamor of many Volumes and tongues, and on your sharpest censures, and on a prison, than venture on that dreadful doom.

2. We cannot be *ignorant* of the *necessaries* of the people; which answereth all that is said against us. I say we cannot be ignorant of them, if we would. We can talk with those learned men that are ignorant of it; with some that think the grossest ignorant, and senseless, and mindless of the life to come, to be better than we, if they will but be for Bishops, Liturgy and Ceremonies; and that think little more Religion than to *hurt no body*, belongeth to the Laity or common people. And with some that have been bred up only at the University, and never knew the ignorance of the vulgar. And with some that have lived among them, and know them not, because they never conversed with them otherwise, than in the Pulpit, or at a Feast, or a common meeting. But their ignorance will not make us ignorant. The Intellect is oft informed necessarily *per modum nature*. Though I thank God that our information hath been voluntary. It was our praefise while we were suffered to do our office, to Catechise all the Families of our Parishes (that did not refuse it); Family by Family, and to try the knowledg of them all, and to discern what they thought of the Essentials of Christianity, and of the things that Christ hath made necessary to Salvation. By which we found that multitudes that come all their life-time to Church, and bear up the reputation of discreet intelligent persons, are utterly ignorant of many Articles of the faith, while they speak the words; so ignorant, that it's hard for Scholars to believe it, that have not tried it. And we have found that multitudes of them will be brought to learn over all the words of the Catechism that never consider or understand the sense, much less the *power* and *practice* of what their tongues recite; but like Parrots rest in the utterance of the words. Either this much will bring them to Salvation, or it will

will not. If it will Christianity, must be a needless thing, or else consist but in a spell or charm of empty words; and the Papists *Latin-devotions* are as good. If it will not, then our Parishes have a necessity of further teaching. If you say, that [*This is not true*], it may serve your turn, but it will not serve ours; no more than if you told us that most of our Parishes speak not *English*. It is not in our power to deny belief to our senses, and the experience of our daily conversation, if we were never so much reviled for our judgment.

But if you say, that the Parish Ministers are sufficient to remedy this calamity, as far as it can be remedied: I answer you, The necessity of our labours is notoriously evident in all these following respects. 1. In respect of the *multitude* that need our help. 2. In regard of the obstinacy of their ignorance, unbelief and sensuality. 3. In regard of the paucity of the publick Ministers. 4. In regard of the real insufficiency, weakness and badness of too great a number of them. And, 5. In regard of abundance of peoples prejudice against them.

1. How many thousands are in some Parishes in *London*, in *Stepney*, in *Cripplegate*, in *Sepulchres*, in *St. Martins*, *St. Clement Danes*, *Giles in the fields*, *Andrews Holborn*, and many others, is ordinarily observed. Abundance of Corporations (from whence the Ministers are excluded) have very many thousands in a Parish. And if there be four thousand (to say nothing of them that have above forty thousand) it is an excellent people if three parts in four be not grossly ignorant of some Essentials of the Christian Religion, and multitudes grossly vicious and ungodly in their lives. When I came first to *Kidderminster* 1640, the Town was ready to stone me as I went along the streets, for preaching the Church-Doctrine of *Original Sin* in Infants, whom they called *Innocents*; till I asked them publickly, Whether they thought their Children were saved without Christ, and why they were baptized? Which they could not answer. When I came to Catechize and confer with them personally, after many years Preaching, many that constantly attended on Teaching, thought that Christ was *Man* on Earth, and is God in Heaven, but made a God-only for his Goodness upon Earth, and not God from Eternity, nor *Man* now he is in *Heaven*. And the whole mystery of Redemption is little known to the most among us.

2. And their sensuality is as hardly cured as their ignorance.

How

How common are the sins of Sodom throughout all the Land? *Ezek. 16. 49. Pride and fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness, and not considering the poor!* Your selves believe, that schism, sedition and disloyalty are too common; swearers and cursers, and railers, and drunkards, accuse themselves in the open streets, and to all that talk with them in daily converse. To say nothing of Atheists, Infidels, Hereticks, Schismaticks, which sure need help, what a multitude are they that never set their hearts on Heaven, nor seek first Gods Kingdom and its Righteousness, nor labour for the meat which never perisheth, *Col. 3. 11. Mat. 6. 20, 21, 33. Job. 6. 27. But their god is their belly, they glory in their shame, and mind earthly things, Phil. 3. 18.* How many mind not the things of the Spirit, but of the flesh, and live and walk according to the flesh, and do but complement with God, and make Religion a Ceremony or a matter on the by, and take Heaven but for a lesser evil than Hell, and for a reserve, when they can keep this world no longer. Either you know that the evidences are notorious that there are thousands among us in this sad condition, or you do not. If you do, you grant what we now assert. If you do not, you are such strangers in England, that you are neither fit to condemn us, nor to be judges at all of the peoples case.

And Oh how hard a matter is it to cure *one* of all these miserable souls! As for the *Ignorant*, many of them are unwilling to learn, if you take them not at the best advantages; and those few that are *willing*, must have long and laborious teaching before they will come to any competent knowledg. If you have but tried the ignorant servants of your own Families, how hard and long a task it is to bring them to know the needful things, you may easily judge how hard it is for a Minister to teach them, that hath them not in his house, and scarce knoweth how to meet them any where but in the Church, where they have learnt to hear as if they heard not.

And when they have a little dark confused knowledg, alas what is this to the light that Christ hath sent into the world, in which the children of light should walk, and which is needful to the work of light which they must do. What is this to that abounding in wisdom and knowledg, to which the Scripture doth exhort men, and by which they must resist temptations, discharge their duties, and honour Christ and Piety in the world? Is it not Christs charge, *Mat. 28. 20.* that when men are made disciples, they must be taught

taught all things else that he hath commanded. And is it not smattering ignorant half-witted Christians which your selves much complain of, and which make most of the trouble in the world? And did you ever consider what a work it is to bring many thousands or hundreds of those in a Parish, unto solid understanding?

And when men have *knowledge*, how hard is it still to make a due impression on their hearts, and bring them really (which every tongue must confess is necessary) to love God above all, and our neighbours as our selves! O! words soon spoken! O difficult work, above the skill and strength of the wisest Minister to accomplish! How hard to cure a drunkard, a fornicator, a swearer, a railer, of his most beastly or unprofitable sin! much more to cure the Infidel, the ambitious, the proud, the worldling! But O how hard to get up mens hearts to a Heavenly frame, and to bring them daily to live after the Spirit, and to live by faith and not by sight; and to set their affections on the things above; and in *hope* and *love* to long and wait for the coming of the Lord!

Sirs, Either you take these things for necessary, or you do not; if you do not, you deny Christianity; and our Controversie lyeth lower; first, Whether there be a life to come, and the Gospel be true, (and how quiet and happy would *England* be, if we were but all heartily agreed in that much!) But if you do, then there remaineth no more controversie, whether our Ministerial helps be needful?

3. And what is one Minister in a Parish for the doing of all this work? yea, or his poor Curate, if he have one (as few have) for his help? By that time he hath read all the Common-Service twice a day, and Preached twice (or once if you had rather), and hath baptized all the Children, and visited all the Sick, and buried all the Dead, and married all that are to be Married, and performed the common Civilities necessary to friends and neighbours, and taken care for food and raiment, and all the necessaries of his house or life, and instructed and governed aright his family; and if he have Children, taken sufficient care of their education; what time, what strength, what spirits are left, for most of all the work forementioned? It irketh me to think that I should have need to repeat these things, and to tell seeing men with so many words, that there is a Sun in the firmament; or seeing men, that it is cold, when frost and snow do cover the earth!

4. And we must say that which we are most unwilling to say, even when you constrain us ; Alas how many Parishes are there in his Majesties three Kingdoms, where the youth, the ignorance, the rawness, the dulness, the carelessness, the idleness, the want of Ministerial utterance in the Teachers, doth perswade all the hearers, that they have need of more and better help ? The hearers, I say, that should best know their own necessities, do commonly believe it, if you deny it. The Sons of the Church do groan out often in my hearing, [Alas what dry and pitiful work is this ! we are afraid all the people will be driven into Conventicles.] *Ichabod*, or the five Groans of the Church hath long since told you somewhat of this ; But the most of *England*, especially *Wales* and *Ireland*, need no Syllogisms to prove it. For my own part, I hear and encourage any that is tollerable ; and I speak the best, and conceal the rest, when I speak to the auditors. But truth is truth, and our modesty will not satisfy the hungry, nor save the miserable souls of men. Is it enough to the instructing of the grossly ignorant, and the changing of an earthly mind to a heavenly, and to pull down the strong holds of sin, for a young raw man to read or say a few good words (perhaps least pertinent to the peoples needs) in a tone like a School-boy saying his lesson ? Or to talk against *Presbyterians* to the poor people, that never knew what *Presbytery* was, and know not what Faith, Repentance, Justification, or Sanctification are ? To deny these things, is but to deceive them that are already deceived ; but *England* will no more believe the denial, than him that would deny that the Snow is white.

And to talk, as one in *Latin* lately, what learned Pastors the Church of *England* hath, is an impertinency to fill up paper. If there be some such (which none deny) and if most of the Parishes in and near *London* have men so tollerable that we much rejoyce in it, doth it follow that it is an error or schism to be acquainted with the rest of the Kingdoms, or to believe our ears, and the sad experience of too great a number in the land ? It is a fine world when it is become a controversie, Whether that which so many thousands in three Kingdoms hear and see be true ?

We write none of this to reproach the Ministry ; we would hide their nakedness if we could. We like not the *Glocester-Coblers* writings, nor the *Centuries*. We only shew you that the reasons are invalid which are fetcht from the sufficiency of the present Ministry, to prove it our duty not to preach.

3. And if it were but the peoples *prejudice* against them, it proveth their necessity. I will purposely say nothing, whether the common charge of scandal be true or false, because I will not meddle with that cause. But be it as it will, if the people once think hardly of them, or of their Preaching, it is not like to do them much good.

I know the common answer is, [*Who is that long of, but of themselves and you?*] To which I say, 1. Suppose it be long of themselves, must their souls be therefore cruelly forsaken? I have wondered to hear and read such reasoning so often from some Pastors of the Church, that should be the Fathers of the flock! *It is long of themselves*, say they! And what then! It is long of our selves that we are all sinners! and must we therefore have no Saviour, no Sanctifier, no Ministry, no remedy! All the sins that you Preach against are long of the sinners themselves! Will you therefore think you are discharged from Preaching?

But you'll say, That it is their *wilfulness*. *Ans.* If there were no will, there were no sin. There is too much wilfulness in all the sin that you commit your selves; must you therefore be forsaken! But O how much better would it beseem an humble tender conscientious Ministry to suspect themselves, and say, *Is there no cause of this distaste in us! If it were partial hereticks only that disliked us for opinion sake, it were no wonder; but when the common people of our Parishes, think our Preaching cold and dry, and our Sermons like a boys Oration, and our lives too little heavenly and holy, what cause have we to fear lest it be too true! or so much at least as will make us guilty of their distaste!* Surely it more nearly concerneth you all to see that you be clear your selves, and to judg your selves before God judg you, than to fall so heavily on the people. When you have been as angry as you will, *men will be men, and ears will be ears*; and as words will not satisfy a hungry stomach, so chiding the poor people, and telling them that the fault is theirs, will not illuminate, quicken, humble and comfort them, nor either do that for them which they want, or make them that are indeed alive to believe that it is done when it is not.

Suppose your own children surfeit by their own fault, and lose their appetite; will you deny them one sort of food which they can eat, because it is long of themselves, that they have lost their appetite to another. Will you say, Eat this or famish, it is long of your selves? Shall the Physician deny his Patient that Physick

which his stomach can take, because it was long of himself that he can take no other? Is this a method fit for Parents, Nurses, or Physicians, to think that it is not their duty to help those that are made diseased or necessitous by themselves? I beseech you think what else your Ministry is for, and why have you your honour and your maintenance, but to serve under Christ, for the saving of those that would destroy themselves? What enemy have you so much need your selves to resist, and to be saved from, as from your selves? Oh that you better knew it! And from whom else would you save the people? Men and Devils cannot hurt them, if they be but saved from themselves.

When I hear a cold and sleepy Preacher, or hear Gods work done so ignorantly and slovenly, as I would not have my boy to say his lesson, I yet confess, [It is long of my self if this Sermon raise not my heart to Heaven. For his very Text, or one of the Scripture-sentences which he cited, should have been enough to do it; because it mentioneth God and Eternity, the least thought of which should raise my soul.] But alas my heart is cold, and dull, and drowsie. This is my disease, or else what need I come to Church for cure? I knew I was faulty; but I hear you, in hope that my faults should be cured. And if you do that which is unsuitable to your hearers faults and maladies, you are faulty Physicians, for no better curing faulty Patients. To tell a man in a fever, or a dropsie, if bread and drink will not cure you, it is long of your own disease, is the answer of such Physicians as are like them in whose hands many thousand souls in the world lye gasping at this day.

If you shall say, That God doth not tie his grace to the ability of the Pastor: I answer, such words are fitter to make ones head and heart to ake, than to put the answerer to any difficulty. Use such arguments about plowing and sowing, about eating and drinking; and when you are to chuse a Tutor or Schoolmaster for your Children; or when you are sick and seek to a Physician: say, God doth not tie his help and blessing to a wise Tutor any more than to an ignorant one; nor to an able Physician any more than to a foolish Emperick. Or if you will fly to the distinction of *spiritual* gifts and *common*, remember that God is no more tyed to means for the one than for the other; and *quoad media habitus infusi se habent ad modum acquisitorum*. At least, set not your greatest Scholars nor sharpest wits to convince a Sectary, or a Papist; for

for Illumination is a spiritual Grace, and God can work on a *Papist* or *Schismatick*, as well by an ignorant Reader. But sure the opinions of these times are not so much for miraculous operations of Omnipotency, nor so much for the vanity of moral suasion and instruction, that we should need to say much in this case, if you could but turn it to a Doctrinal-controversie, where their *Interest* is not against it. God can work convictions and conversion by the unlikeliest means. But he *usually* worketh according to the aptitude of the means he useth. And sure I am, that it is our duty (both teachers and hearers) to chuse the best; and to study and preach even as we would do, if all lay on our skill and diligence; but to know that when *Paul* hath planted, and *Apollo* watered, it is God still that must give the increase. But he will not give so much to *Judas* as to *Paul* and *Apollo*.

But the second charge is, that it is long of us that any of the present Ministers are distasted. *Ans.* And is this true? 1. Is it because we hear them. 2. Or is it because we perswade the people to hear them (if they are but tolerable men?) 3. Or is it because we sometime repeat their Sermons, and speak honourably of them. 4. Or is it because we rebuke those that vilifie them? 5. Or is it because that we so *preach and live* as that the people perceive a difference. There you must pardon us; we cannot cure that opinion as some would have us. We dare not *preach worse*, or *live worse*, (as I said before) for fear of making others worse thought of. 6. But why is it not as much long of your *salves* as of us? Why do the people make such a difference between conformable Preachers as they do? Why do they honour and crowd after one, and slight another? Is this long of us too? If men were not blinded by partiality, they might quickly see the cause. While nature teacheth men to love themselves, and use their reason for their souls, and men can discern (as they say) chalk from cheese, it is not reviling the people as giddy and humourfome, for perceiving what doth most edifie their souls, that will serve the turn to make them value an ignorant, idle, empty fellow, equal to a convincing, laborious, holy Pastor (whether he conform or not.)

And verily I would have none plead too eagerly for the reputation of the ignorant, dull or negligent, that would not be taken for such a one himself, lest the hearers suspect, *No caudâ vulves iste careat*, that they vilifie but what they want. *Licinius* that was so much against learning, was utterly void of learning himself.

And

'And if once men could bring it to this (as they never will) to persuade the people to overlook all mens personal worth and parts, and arguings and perswasions, and only to have an equal respect to all, as all are Ministers, it were the certain way to bring them to contemn you all, and to have a respect for none. For though we confesse that the *Office* must be revered as well as the gifts; yet when once you trust only to the reverence of your *bare Office*, without your gifts, you will be served as the giftless ignorant Priests were by *Luther*, *Melancthon*, and others that overtopt them, and made them all the common scorn.

Mark, (if experience signifie any thing at all with you) whether the Gospel hath not risen and fallen in its successes in all ages and Countrys, as the wisdom, skill, and utterance and holiness of the Preachers of it did rise or fall.

My Lord *Verulam* hath truly minded us (in his Considerations) that our Calling is not like a Kings, which consisteth more in authority than abilities, but a *function* to be exercised by personal *abilities*, though not without Divine authority, like a Licensed Physicians or Lawyers. And would you devise a more effectual way to make all Physicians the scorn of the world, than if you could deprive them of their skill, and make them all empty ignorant men; or to make all Lawyers the common scorn, than to set up only such as can scarce speak sense or reason, for the people to laugh at, or the Stages to make Plays on. Again I tell you, that men will be men, and reason will be reason, when those that would set up an Image instead of humanity and reason, have done their worst.

In a word, when it is possible for us to believe that neither *England* or *Wales*, neither populous Cities, nor ignorant Countrys, do need any more help than the present Parish Ministers either do or can afford them, we promise to give over Preaching the Gospel in this Land.

But one great Objection I had almost forgotten: *Obj.* This may be something for your conference with them family by family; but what is it for your preaching unto Congregations? If the publick Ministers Preaching will not do it, why should yours?

Ans. 1. It is our judgment, that where no more publick Preaching is wanting, it is the best way for the Nonconformists to attend the publick Ministry, and themselves only to go from house to house, to Catechise, exhort and help them, as they are able

able and have opportunity. But it is but seldom that the proper sort of people have any leisure except on the *Lords day*, and *Holy-days*, (so urgent are their necessities and labours) And it is but one or two houses in a week that one man can go to in such a manner; and so the most may be dead and out of hearing before we have such opportunities to speak to them. 2. And they that may not come into Cities and Corporations, nor within five miles of any place where ever they Preached, shall leave the populous places where publick Ministers have most need of private help, without any such assistance at all. 3. And is not both better than one? To speak to many when they can have time to hear, and to speak also to single persons when we can? 4. It is not one of very many that can come to Church in many Parishes in *London* if they would. The Churches will not hold the tenth person in the Parish; and how few Churches near * are standing? and must all the rest be quite forsaken. 5. And we say that is good that doth good. Two may do more than one. He may profit by one that will not by another. 6. Do you believe that any (alas, must I say any) Conformists are weak, raw, dull and slothful Preachers, very unlike to work much on mens souls, or do you not? If you do not, we despair of giving you convincing evidence of any thing in the world. But if you do, why is there not need of the help of such as have more skill for such a work? and whom the people think do most profit them; their practise will yet further shew you if you will but leave them to themselves.

* 1669.

III. **O**ur next Reason is fetcht from the very plain expressions of the Scriptures; which I shall first recite, and then shew you their strength for us, and answer the common evasions of them that would disoblige us, and gratifie our sloth.

And, 1. Take notice of those that describe the Office, and its duration, *Mat. 5. 13, 14, 15, 16. Ye are the salt of the earth, &c. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick, and it giveth light to all that are in the house. Let your light so shine, &c.* That this is spoken of Ministers, see Dr. *Hammond* and others commonly on the Text. And ordinary Ministers are *Lights of Christs setting up*, as well as extraordinary.

There-

Therefore his *Promise* extendeth further than to *Apostles*, and therefore so doth his *commission*, *Mat.* 28. 19, 20. *Go and teach all Nations, baptizing them, &c. teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo I am with you always to the end of the world.*

And, *Eph.* 4. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16. it is ordinary *Pastors* as well as extraordinary, that are the *gift of Christ*, for that work which is to be done unto the end, for the *perfecting of the Saints*, for the *work of the Ministry*, for the *edifying of the body of Christ*, till we all come in the *unity of the faith*, and of the *knowledge of the Son of God* unto a *perfect man*, unto the *measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ*, &c.

It is true we be not called as *Apostles* were; but several *modes* of *Vocation*, make not several *Originals* of power. We are under the same *Master*, and have our *Office* from *Christ*, and hold it under him as well as they, and have his *command* as well as his *gifts* to exercise it to the end. Therefore if *Apostles* must obey him by constancy, so must we.

As *Apostles* are separated to the *Gospel of God*, so are we by our *consecration*, *Rom.* 1. 1. and therefore are commanded to give up our selves wholly to this work, and to continue in *Doctrine*, that we may save our selves and them that hear us, *1 Tim.* 4. 15, 16.

It is not only *Apostles* (who yet call themselves fellow-*Presbyters*, *1 Pet.* 5. 1.) that are *Stewards of the mysteries of God*, and must be so accounted of, and therefore must be faithful to the trust that *Christ* their *Master* placeth in them, *1 Cor.* 4. 1, 2. For ordinary *Pastors* are so called, *Tit.* 1. 7. And surely it is not only *Apostles* that are meant, *Mat.* 24. 45, 46, 48. *Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his Lord hath made Ruler over his household to give them meat in due season. Blessed is that servant whom his Lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Verily I say unto you, that he shall make him ruler over all his goods. But if that evil servant shall say in his heart, my Lord delayeth his coming, and shall begin to smite his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken, &c. Here observe,* 1. That those have a Charge and Law immediately from *Christs* mouth, who are his *Ministers* or *Stewards* to feed his flock, and not *Apostles* only. 2. That they are the *Rulers of his house*, and *Judges of the season of feeding his household*. 3. That they must be found so doing at the coming of *Christ*, (who liveth till then.) 4. That this is
that

that coming, when he will make the faithful Rulers over all his goods. 5. That smiting fellow-servants, and glutting the flesh with fulness, are the marks of wicked Ministers that Christ will damn.

2. Those Texts also must be considered, that plainly plead for the necessity of Preaching when forbidden by Magistrates, *Act. 4. 19. & 5. 28.* Whether it be better to obey God or men, judg ye. Ordinary as well as extraordinary Ministers are intrusted with the Word and Sacraments, and commanded by Christ himself in his Law, to constancy and faithfulness. And ordinary Ministers as well as Apostles must obey God rather than men. The Sanhedrin had not the face to deny it, as Dr. Hammond noteth, and therefore the Apostles left it to their Consciences to judg.

1 Cor. 9. 14, 16. *Necessity is laid upon me, yea wo is unto me if I preach not the Gospel.* To talk now of impertinent disparities, is but the shift of those that have very gross wits to work upon, that will be abused by any thing. Paul spake this of himself; but was it of himself only as *extraordinarily* called? If you so put off all that is spoken to and of Apostles, you will lose your strongest argument for *Episcopacy*, which is fetcht from the Apostles power. And you will cast by most Texts that all Ministers and Christians are obliged by, to a great part of their duty. Is there a *necessity* laid on ordinary Pastors also, or not? If you say not, speak out that you may be understood. If yea, then *wo be to them also if they preach not the Gospel*, though Rulers be against it, as they were against the Preaching of Paul. *Necessity* was laid on Paul by a voice from heaven, and *necessity* is laid on us by the word of God in Scripture, when Ordination hath consecrated us to the office; and wo to them that feel not the obligation of *Necessity*.

Act. 4. 29. And now, Lord, behold their threatenings, and grant to thy servants that with all boldness they may speak thy word. Mens threatenings will not dispense with us as to the duty of Preaching boldly.

Obj. Men did not give the Apostles their power, and therefore men could not take it away.

Ans. 1. Men give not any Pastors their office or power, but only: 1. Design the person that shall receive it from Christ (as is aforesaid.) 2. And Ministerially invest them with it, as a servant deli-

delivereth possession by a Key, or twig, or turf, who yet is none of the *Giver* of the *Right* as from himself. 3. And Magistrates give *Liberty of Exercise*; and so they might do to the Apostles.

2. Men gave the office to *other Ministers* in those times in the same improper sense as they may be said to give it now. Almost all the Princes and Rulers in the world where the Gospel came, were against the Preaching of it; and many of them forbade the Preachers. And yet the universal consent of all the Churches, and chief Martyrs hath still been, that their Prohibitions would not warrant the Pastors to give over Preaching.

And hear the Holy Ghost also in this case, 2 Tim. 4. 1, 2. *I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his Kingdom, (O dreadful charge!) preach the word; be instant in season, out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine. Sure the Spirit of God foresaw what would be said against Preaching in our times; was not Timothy ordained by man? Did he not preach against the Rulers will? and yet must he do it, in season and out of season, on so severe a charge! O Lord forgive all our omissions, and negligence, which hath been occasioned by the will of man, against the will and interest of Christ!*

So, 1 Tim. 6. 13, 14. *I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession, that thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, &c. What Commandment? why the Laws for the Ministry before laid down. But what if the Rulers be against it? That was undoubtedly expected; and yet you see the terrible charge, till the appearing of Christ.*

Therefore as one that was to be judged as an offender for his Ministry at the Bar of man, he exhorteth him, 2 Tim. 1. 8. *Be not thou ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, and of me his prisoner, but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the Gospel. Ver. 11, 12, 13. Whereunto I am appointed a Preacher, and an Apostle, and a Teacher of the Gentiles, for the which cause I also suffer these things: Nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, &c. Hold fast the form of sound words which thou hast heard of me, &c. That good thing which was committed to thee, keep, &c. How keep? not secretly only as a Christian, but openly as a Preacher, though thou suffer for it as I do.*

So must *Tim.* Chap. 2. 15. *These things speak and exhort, and rebuke with all authority.* And such another charge have the Elders or Bishops from the Apostle *Peter*, 1 *Pet.* 5. 1, 2, 3.

Qu. But is this also the case of those that succeeded them?

Ans. Yes, they ordained others into the same office, under the same Law of constancy and fidelity, 2 *Tim.* 2. 2. *The things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.* Though still the Rulers were against it. And 2 *Tim.* 2. 24, 25. *The servant of the Lord must be apt to teach. And what an example of Preaching publicly and from house to house, night and day, doth Paul give to all the Ephesian Elders, Act. 20. even when Rulers were against it?*

And again, I say, the practise and martyrdom of many, and the writings of others do assure us that this was the judgment of *Clement Romanus*, *Ignatius*, *Polycarp*, *Cyprian*, *Irenaeus*, *Clement Alex.* *Andrianus*, *Origen*, and generally of all the ancient Church, who were called as we are by men, and yet Preached to the death against the will of the Magistrate.

And as *Paul* himself desireth prayers for him, that utterance may be given him, that he might open his mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the Gospel, for which he was an Ambassador in bonds, that therein he might speak boldly as he ought to speak, *Eph.* 6. 19, 20. So he oft commendeth his fellow-labourers that accordingly served with him in the Gospel, though they were no Apostles, *Phil.* 2. 22. & 4. 3. *Rom.* 16, &c. And as he spake not as a man-pleaser, 1 *Thes.* 2. 4. *Gal.* 1. 7, 8. and as Christ would have his word preached as on the house top, *Mat.* 10. 7, 8. so this is done as a duty of fidelity in Ministers as such; and therefore Christ adjoineth with this charge such words as these that shew the Rulers Prohibition, *Verf.* 16, 17, &c. 28. *Behold I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves, be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves: but beware of men, for they will deliver you up to the Councils, and they will scourge you in their Synagogues; and ye shall be brought before Governours and Kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles, &c. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name sake, &c. But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another. The disciple is not above his master, &c. Fear them not therefore, &c. Fear them not which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul, but rather fear him, &c.* These are the next words

to the command, *What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in the light: and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye on the house-top.*

Luk. 9. 62. *No man having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of God.* Both *Christians as such*, and *Ministers as such*, must absolutely give up themselves to Christ, and not look back for fear of man, whatever it cost them to proceed.

3. *Mat. 9. 38. Luk. 10. 2. Christ commandeth, Pray the Lord of the harvest to send forth labourers into his harvest; viz. because the harvest is great, and the labourers few.* And this is every Christians daily prayer, when we say, *Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven.* If it be our duty daily to pray God to proportion the number of *Labourers* to the greatness and necessity of the work; and that his Kingdom, and the obedience of his will, may be by his appointed means promoted on earth, then it is our duty to *do as we pray*, and not play the hypocrites with God, as *St. James* his reprov'd hypocrites did as to the relieving of the poor; that said, *Go and be clothed and warmed*, but gave them neither clothes nor food. For a called *Minister* to pray, Lord send out more Preachers, and such as will promote thy Kingdom, and perswade the world to do thy will; while he forbeareth to Preach himself, because that man forbiddeth him unwarrantably, this is as *very* a mocking of God, as it would be by the rich and covetous to pray, Lord send some to relieve the poor, when he giveth them nothing of his abundance.

4. The *Reasons* of all these Commands for constant Preaching, are *moral* and *perpetual*; for the work of the *Ministry* is to *open mens eyes*, and *turn them from darkness to light*, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive remission of sins, and inheritance among the sanctified, &c. *Act. 26. 17, 18.* But this work for these ends belongs to us to this day; and therefore these Reasons intimate that the like constancy is our duty as was theirs.

But before I proceed to our further Reasons, it will here be expected that I say somewhat more to the grand Objection, *viz. These that you talk of were Infidel or Heathen Rulers; and will you compare ours with them? Or, doth it follow that Christian Rulers may not silence Ministers, because they might not?*

Ans. 1. No, far be it from me to compare our Governours with such: We thank'ully acknowledg it to be the Glory of England,

Land, that it hath a King and Magistracy that owneth Christianity ; yea more, that when the whole world hath but three Protestant Kings (that I know of) we have not only one of the three, but the *chiefest* ; who keepeth Religion in greater purity than the rest. But that which I have all this while been proving is but this, *That where and when the Gospel is necessary to be preached, true Ministers of Christ may not lawfully forbear, because the Rulers do forbid them, though they be not Apostles, but called by the way of man.*

2. A Christian Magistrate doth no more Ordain and Degrade than other Rulers ; but he is the *Governour* of the Ministers, to keep them from neglecting or abusing their Callings ; and he may drive those out of his Dominions that will not otherwise be kept from *subverting faith or godliness*, or that are *proved truly* to do *more hurt than good* in the Land. And therefore if the King restrain or banish those that are truly the plagues and destroyers of the Land, or of Religion, or Loyalty, he shall never be blamed for it by us. Or if ever it be the question only, *Whether this man or that man be fittest to have his countenance and maintenance, and to be by him allowed to preach, when only one of the two is needful*, we shall never speak against him for chusing according to his judgment, as long as *meer hereticks, impious, or intollerably unable ones* are not chosen. But if many hundred worthy Ministers shall be forbidden to Preach at a time and in a Land where many hundred thousand souls do wofully cry out for help, as lying in damnable ignorance and sensuality, and ungodliness, in this case we say, that no Rulers may forbid such Preaching.

3. The Objectors seem to intimate dangerous Doctrine, that if a King should not be a Christian, or of the right Religion, he lost his power over the Church, which is false, however maintained by the *Papists*. The Heathen and Infidel Rulers had the Government of all their Subjects, Christians and Apostles as well as others. They wanted *aptitude* to do it well, and therefore some of them persecuted ; But they wanted not *Authority* ; a King loseth not his *Authority*, when ever he loseth his *aptitude* to use it rightly. *Christian Kings* only can rule the Church well, but others also are its *authorized Rulers* ; and there is no *external coercive power* at all but in the Kings or Magistrates, be they *Christian* or *Infidel*.

4. Christ himself did not set up a *Kingdom of this world*, or *worldly*, nor exempt himself from the Government of the Rulers.

Not

Nor did his *Apostles* exempt themselves or the Church. *Paul*, *Rom. 13*, &c. and *Peter*, call on all Christians to honour the King, and to be subject to the higher powers for conscience sake. Mark then in this how little our case doth differ from the Apostles, when they were forbidden to preach, not by Usurpers only, but by lawful Rulers, to whom they professed conscientious subjection; and yet must obey God rather than those very Rulers.

5. *Christian Rulers* are the Churches nursing Fathers; and have more obligation than others to build it up, but no more power to pull it down. They have all their power as *Paul* had his, For edification and not for destruction. It was never referred to them to judge (as I have before said) whether there shall be a Church, or a Christ, or a Ministry, or whether souls shall be saved or damned; or the Gospel Preached where it is necessary to Salvation, or not? But only by whom, and in what order, which best furthereth mens Salvation, it shall be Preached.

If a Magistrate as a Magistrate may not forbid necessary Preaching, much less may a Christian Magistrate as Christian, who is more obliged to promote it. This therefore altereth not the case.

6. The Sanhedrin, and Herod, and other Jewish Rulers, had such real Authority as Christ did not disown; of the same nature with *Jehoshaphats* and *Hezekiahs*. If therefore these were not to be obeyed when they forbade necessary Preaching, then lawful Rulers in that case are not to be obeyed.

7. The *Arrian* Emperours had lawful Power of coactive Government over the Church; and yet the Orthodox Bishops never thought it their duty to cease Preaching in Conscience of obeying their commands. (Though they were forced oft to quit their present Stations.) Let not any *Cainite* here say that I compare our Rulers to *Arrians*. For I only argue, that if an *Arrian* Emperour had true Authority, and yet when he thus abused it, was not to be obeyed by forbearing to Preach; the same must be said of others that have authority, in case of the like Prohibitions.

8. Christ settled Pastors over his Churches 300 years before there were any Christian Princes or States. By which he shewed, that though Princes are the true Rulers of Pastors, yet Pastors are more necessary to the Being of the Church, and to Salvation of the people, than Princes are; and that Pastors hold not their office from Princes, nor at their will, (unless you think they had no true power till *Constantines* reign.)

9. Magi-

9. Magistrates may not hinder a *sufficient number* from entering into the Ministry, (else the meaning of Christ must be, *Pray the Lord of the harvest to persuade Kings and Rulers to give leave to men to become Labourers.*) Therefore they may not hinder a *sufficient number* from labouring when they are entered.

10. Magistrates cannot dispense with absolute *lawful Vows* to God (at least about necessary duty.) This all Protestant Divines maintain in their Writings against the *Papists*, who plead for the Popes power to dispense with Vows.) But our entrance into the Ministry had the nature of an absolute lawful Vow, (and was done by the Magistrates encouragement.) For in it we did solemnly devote ourselves to the Sacred office and work.

11. Magistrates are Christs Officers and Servants, and have no power but *from him*, and *for him*, (as the Justice and Constable are under the King.) Therefore they have no power against him. Therefore they have no power to forbid the necessary *Preaching* of the Gospel, (and where it is not *necessary*, we confess their power.)

12. If the Magistrate might degrade Ministers, or absolutely forbid their work, then it would follow, that one Prince hath the Government of all other Princes Dominions, or else that all Princes on earth must agree to the degrading of a Minister. For it is fully proved by Divines of all parties, except some of the *Independents*, that Ministers at their Ordination are (as Christians at their Baptism) entered into a Relation to the Universal Church, and not only to one particular Church. And therefore he that is removed from one Church or Kingdom, is not removed from the Ministerial office, which continueth as towards an indefinite object. Yea, we are first in order of nature related to the unconverted world, as we have capacity: *Go teach all Nations, baptizing them*, will be Christs Law to the end of the world. And if they cannot degrade, they cannot take away the power of exercising the office *statedly*; but only suspend it for a time, or limit the exercise, or regulate it by their governing power, on just occasions; and governing an office is not nullifying or destroying it.

Obj But if the Magistrate may suspend them, and deny them liberty in his dominions, then it is he, and not every Minister, that is to judge who deserve such restraint.

1. If you speak of *publick judgment* (which is the publick decision of a controverted cause) no doubt it is only the Magistrate that is Judge, *in foro civili*: No Pastor may enter into the Judgment-seat, and judge his own cause. But if you speak of a *private judgment of discerning*, every mans reason is the discerners of his own duty; for he cannot do it without discerning it.

2. The Magistrate is to judge publickly, but not *as he list*, as left to his own will; but as an officer of Christ under the regulation of his Laws, (as our Judges are regulated by the Kings Laws.) The King may judge between an Infidel and a Christian, whether Christ be the Son of God; but not indifferently as he please; but only in the affirmative. He may judge if it become a publick Controversie, whether God shall be worshipped? whether he may be blasphemed? whether there be a life to come? whether the Scripture be Gods word? and so, whether there shall be a Ministry? whether Ministers shall preach in his Dominions? or so many as is necessary to mens Salvation? But he is bound before hand to judge only one way, and hath no power to judge on the other side at all. Else he might judge that men shall not be saved? and that Christ shall have no Ministers or Church; and consequently be no Christ.

3. Yet if Rulers do judge amiss in any such cases, they are not by force of arms to be resisted, though they are not to be obeyed.

Obj. By this pretence of a private judgment of discerning, you will set up two Sovereigns, or make every mans conscience his King; and so the King having lost his power over conscience, a zealous conscience will be the unruliest beast in the world.

Ans. 1. In good sadness would you have men have a judgment of *private discerning*, or not? If you would, all this concerneth you as well as us. If not, then no man must discern that it is his duty to obey the King rather than an Usurper, or rather than to rebel against him. Such excellent assistance would brutish principles give to Government! then men must not discern whether to preach or be silent? or what to preach on? Nor whether to be drunk or sober? chaste or unchaste? To think and speak well or ill? whether God should be honoured or blasphemed? or what Religion we should be of, Christians or Infidels? Then only the King

King must be a man, and his subjects bruits, that must use no reason; and so the King be made a herdsman to govern beasts instead of men. And then what Councillors, Judges and Justices shall he have? and O then what excellent Preaching shall the people hear! Absolute obedience is due only unto God.

2. And as to what you say of Conscience, to bind *conscience*, that is, *science*, is an improper expression; but as to that which is commonly meant by it, it is one thing to bind a *mans soul* to *make conscience* of his duty, and another thing to bind his *soul* to *go against the conscience* of his duty. *Binding conscience* is an ambiguous word. We flatly affirm as well as you, That the Kings Laws do bind the *mind* or *soul* (or Conscience if you will so call it) to a *conscionable performance* of all his lawful commands; for nothing but cords and irons bind the body without the soul; and he that obligeth not the *soul*, obligeth not the *man*; and he that *obligeth* not, *ruleth* not. As God bindeth by a *primary obligation* as *God*, so Kings bind the *mind* by a *secondary obligation*, by the power which they derive from God as men. I say, not only that God bindeth us in conscience to obey the King, but that the Kings derived power enableth him to *oblige the soul* in subordination to God; which is no more than to say that he may *make Laws* and *rule by them*. But whether this shall be called a binding of conscience, is only *in nomine*.

Conscience is sometime taken as largely as *conscire*; and so we are *conscious* of our duty to the King. But in *Theology* it is usually taken more strictly, for a *mans judgment of himself as he stands related to the judgment of God*. And so when the very definition appropriateth Conscience to our *relation to God*, it cannot so be subject to man.

3. *Conscience* is no King, no *Competitor* with the King, no *Ruler* of any man at all (in a true proper sense.) It is but only a *discerner of our duty*, and not a *maker* of it; a *knower* and *applier* of the Law, and not a *Law-giver*. And is it not fine reasoning to say, *If a man must be the discerners of his duty to God and the King, he can be no good subject?*

4. And *Conscience discerning duty to God*, is it that is here to be orderly distinguished from *Conscience discerning duty to man*? *God* and *man* are our Governours; if we are not agreed which of them is the greater, stay a while, and we shall be agreed. *Conscience* is but a *discerner* of our respective duty to each of them; (or taken

ken strictly and Theologically, of our duty to God only) so that *this* is the question, Whether when a man is conscious of his duty to God, he may omit it, because that man forbiddeth it? Or when a man is conscious what God forbiddeth, he may do it if man command it? so that for *man to bind Conscience* (if you will speak ineptly) to duty, is one thing; and for man to bind us to go against conscience is another thing. For that's all one as to bind us to do that which, as far as we can discern, is against Gods Law; and so the issue of all is, *whether conscience of Gods command, or conscience of mans command, is to be preferred?* And this being the plain English of the case, is it not a blessed time and land think you, when confident raw confused wits shall by such questions as, *Whether the King or Conscience be supream*, deceive and mislead poor people in a maze, and confound them as to all Religion; when an ordinary wit that had been but preserved by *Humility and Catholicism*, (or freedom from faction) might easily have distinguished, and set them in the open light?

13. It went for current in the Catholick Church, not only for the first 300 years, but long after there were Christian Emperors, that the people were to chuse their Pastors. *Cyprians* Epistle that earnestly pleadeth for the peoples power and duty in this kind, and chargeth the guilt upon them if they forsake not seducing and schismatical Pastors, is well known. The common practise of the Churches also is known as well. And long after there were Christian Emperours, though some Dignitaries, as Patriarchs, and a few great Bishops, were obtruded on the people by the Emperours choice, when they could not agree among themselves, yet the people constantly kept their former custom and priviledg, and chose all the ordinary Bishops and Pastors in conjunction with the Presbyters. The Bishops sometimes chose alone who should be a Minister in general (as the Colledg of Physicians licenseth general Physicians.) But who should be *their own Pastors*, was always, or usually at the peoples choice (with the Ordainers), (as every man chuseth his own Physician.) See *Blondels* copious Testimony *de jure plebis in regimine Ecclesiastico*, adjoined to *Grotius* his Excellent Treatise, *de Imperio sumar. potest. circa sacra*.

Now this being so, the old Christians never believed that the Emperour could justly, so frustrate their choice; as to make it unlawful by his prohibition, for their Pastors to preach to them, when their Preaching was necessary to the Churches good; nor that the

Emperours were the only Judges of the necessity ; and that God and nature had given no power to themselves, to know what is necessary, good and helpful, or unnecessary, bad or hurtful to themselves.

Obj. The sheep chuse not their own shepherds, nor children their own School-masters.

Ans. 1. This is, as some call it, *Phrase-divinity*. Similitudes prove nothing beyond the point of likeness. Sheep have not reason, and children have it not in maturity and full use. 2. Are we grown better and wiser now than the Churches all were for 600 years? or for the first 300 either? Why do men pretend so much to antiquity, and cry out against novelty, who when *interest* bids them do more than others, despise the judgment and example of the Primitive ancient Church, as a ragged, sordid, infant-thing? 3. Mans *nature* hath laid the foundation of this order. It is not possible for the people to be edified by Ministers, or worship God in their communion acceptably, against their own wills. And therefore as their *consent* is of absolute necessity to their benefit and salvation, so it is the more necessary to the just calling of him that must profit them. For they are the likelier to consent to his Doctrine and rule, when they have first consented to his relation ; and so *e contra*, they are the likelier to reject the guidance of him that was forced on them against their wills.

Obj. But what divisions and heresies shall we have if all the people shall chuse their Pastors? and then they may bring in Hereticks whether the Magistrates will or not.

Ans. 1. Their *choice* is a matter of mutable convenience, but their *consent* is a matter of necessity.

2. I say not that *they alone* must chuse them or consent. Two or three Negative wills, *sine quibus non*, in a case of great concernment, is safer than one alone. Writings or treasures belonging to three parties kept in a chest, of which every party hath a lock and key, are safer than under a single lock. The Ordainers have a negative voice, and so have the people, as to the relation of the Pastors to themselves. And so hath the Magistrate (under God's Laws), whether that man shall live or preach in his dominions.

3. And God in wisdom is pleased to lay all mens salvation or damnation more upon themselves, and their own *choice*, than on the Kings; because it is themselves that must have the everlasting joy or sorrow. And therefore so he hath done by all the actions and means that stand nearest to their own Salvation.

4. And when we say the *Ordainers* and *people* conjunctly should chuse their Pastors, we still say that when they are chosen, they are under the Government of the King.

5. Apply all your Objections to the case of a Physician to his Patients; it is meet that all Physicians be under the Government of the King, and that he by Laws restrain them from the abuse of their callings. And it is meet that the Colledg that can best judg, be the discerners who shall be a Licensed Physician? But when all's done, it is not meet that any one be forced on the sick without their own consent? And why? 1. Because their consent is necessary to the use of the remedies. 2. Because it is themselves that are most concerned in the event. 3. Because every man knoweth much of his own condition, which the King doth not know. Yet here you may as handsomely exclaim, What? shall every woman, every boy, every sottish rustick and tradesman, have liberty to put his life into the hands of women or foolish Empericks? what murdering of men by medicine shall we then have? and what diminution of the Kings subjects. *Ans.* But, 1. this is your error which confoundeth all, that you think the matters of imperfect man in an imperfect world, can be done without any imperfection or inconvenience; and then that you look only with one eye on your own side, and cannot or will not see the far greater inconveniencies on the other side; but will cure an inconvenience with a mischief, and subvert the end and substance to preserve your particular way of *Order*. What would follow on the other side, if all men must have Physicians forced on them? Those empty fellows that could make most friends, should be the seekers and finders of the place, (especially if Physicians were made Lords, and had the honour and maintenance that Bishops have.) And next, the people must be taught by these formalists, that it is not for them to judg themselves what is good or bad for them, nor when to take Physick, nor how much. And next they must be told, that it being an office of Government as well as of skill, they must put their lives into his hand who ever he be, that is the Physician of the place, and not go to others, as abler men. O what work would these *Orderers* make!

If you here except against the aptness of the *similitude*, I will only ask you now, 1. Whether the King is not as truly the Governour of his subjects as to their lives, as he is as to their Salvation? Do not his subjects bodies and lives belong to his care? 2. Is not every man as much concerned for *his own soul*, more than the King is, or any other, as he is for his health or life? Will not the Salvation or damnation be his own? 3. Is not every mans free-will as much and more to be exercised for his salvation as for his health? You may drench him by force as a horse for his health, (and therefore there is more pretence for cogent Laws): But so you cannot for his soul. These things are plain to them that are willing to see; but not to them whose *interest* will not give them leave, but like the *Ephesian* Craftsmen, must cry up *Diana*, and cry down *Paul*, to save their Trades. And yet I still maintain that the King is to afford his Subjects all help in his power, for their souls as well as for their bodies.

IV. OUR Fourth main Reason why we dare not cease our Ministry, is, Because we shall sin against Nature it self, even the great and radical Law of Love, and shall be guilty of murdering mens souls. And because Magistrates cannot dispense with the great and necessary Laws of Nature, we put them all in to one for brevity.

1. If we were Lay-men, yet charity would naturally oblige us, to do our best to save mens souls, in a way that doth not greater hurt. Deny this; and you deny the master-points of natural obligation, and are unfit to dispute about things indifferent. And the judgment of the ancient Church, (as the case of *Origen* and other Teachers and Catechists at *Alexandria*, as well as that of *Prudentius* and *Edeus* do witness) is flat against you; and so is the common judgment of Divines, both Protestants and Papists, who use to cite these instances to prove that in some case Lay-men may be publick Teachers. But if they might not in Churches (lest they seem usurpers) yet in other places they may do it, when necessity requireth it, and so they exceed not their abilities in their undertakings.

2. But being once consecrated as Ministers to Christ, we are now under a double Law of diligence; the Law of Nature, and the positive Law of the Ministry; (as a Father sinneth against the

Law

Law of Nature and Love, and against the positive Laws of his Relation, if he famish his Children.)

And here we must take into consideration, 1. That a soul is more precious than a body, and a mans salvation or damnation is a thousand times more than his life or death. 2. That yet the murder of mens natural life is a sin so great, that no man hath power to allow us in or justifie. 3. That Love and the expressions of it are so very great duties, that it is called, *The fulfilling of the Law*; and according to it the process and doom of mens final judgment is described in *Mat. 25*. It is for not feeding, not clothing, not visiting, &c. that men perish; and not feeding and saving souls is worse. 4. That murder of body or soul may be committed by *Privative* means, as truly as by *Positive*. He that provideth not for his own, and his family, hath denied the faith, and is worse than an Infidel. The Father that famisheth his Children, murdereth them, as well as he that cuts their throats. And if *Ezekiel* (*Chap. 18. 33.*) &c. had so strict a charge of the people as Gods watchman, that their blood should be required at his hands if he were silent; though we are no Prophets, we are called by the ordinary way (as the Priests then were) to as real a charge. So that their damnation may be charged on us if we be silent, whoever forbids us, when our Preaching is necessary. And when in our thoughts we compare the peoples lying for ever in Hell, with our lying in prison for a little time, or lying under displeasure or reproach, O how vastly different is the case! If you your selves believe not such a state of impenitent souls hereafter, and that convincing and converting teaching, is needful to prevent it, give over your callings, and lay not claim to Tyths, and Glebes, and Lands, and Lordships, for a needless work. But if you do believe it, judg then of our case as men that do believe it. Suppose those damned souls were now crying out against us, Why did you not teach us, and call upon us, and warn us, that we might not have come to this place of torment? and we should answer them, *The Magistrates forbade us*. would this answer seem wise and honest to your selves, if you did but see the things you hear of?

Obj. *But the Magistrate may chuse the objects of your charity, and also he may regulate it: And so the Law forbiddeth you to relieve the wandering poor; Charity in general is necessary; but what way it shall be used in, whether high ways, or Bridges, or building*

building Churches, &c. the Magistrate may determine.

Ans. There are more things go for *indifferent* with some men, than Ceremonies. Charity in general without any determinate *object* or way of expression, is nothing. It is but a Logical name. And as for the objects, some are to our charity of standing necessity, and so are some *expressions* of it; and some other acts of charity are about mutable circumstances to be governed by men; that is, the Universal Laws of the Universal Sovereign, have predetermined of some, and not left them as mutable to the Laws of men. It is not in our judgment an indifferent thing, nor alterable by the will of Princes, whether Parents shall nourish their Children, or whether Children shall supply their Parents wants if able? Nor whether we shall give food to him that is dying through famine? Nor whether we shall seek to save mens lives from fire or water, or other dangers? Otherwise all the charge against the damned at the day of Judgment, described *Mat. 25.* might be answered in a word, and Christs mouth be stopped, by saying, Rulers forbid us to feed thee, to clothe thee, to visit thee in thy members. He that may not command me to murder the innocent by action, may not command me to do it by omission or privation; except in case that the publick good or safety, or the lives of many will be hazarded by my saving the life of one. It is not to us a thing indifferent whether a man or many thousand men, be saved or damned. Nor is it in mans power to warrant us to forbear that means that is really necessary to mens Salvation, according to Gods ordinary way of working.

2. We fully grant that the Magistrate may regulate acts of Charity, that is, he may govern us in them for the better promoting of their ends. But he may not hinder them on that pretence, or destroy the end. I will obey the Law that forbiddeth me to relieve a wandering beggar, if really he be not in danger of death for want of food; but if he be ready to die at my door, I will disobey the Law, except in case that the saving of that one mans life would destroy many, or hinder a greater good. If the Law make one in every Parish an Overseer of the poor, and forbid all other relief but by that Overseer; and either through the number of the poor, or his own disability or negligence, he relieveth not one of twenty, or at least so poorly, that twenty, or ten, or two to one are in danger of famishing, I will disobey that Law, and relieve them

them as far as I am able, though I go to Goal for it, and be volumi-
nously railed at as a Schismatick or Rebel.

Yea more, if the poor be ideots, foolish, proud and surly, and
will rather famish than beg relief of their Overseer, I will take my
self as guilty of their death, if I relieve them not when I am able;
and if I think their folly to be my excuse, I shall be de-
ceived.

And here I cannot but confess my dissent from the Ecclesiastical
Politician in the case of Scandal, Pag. 230, 231. I do not believe
that *the Schools distinction of Scandal into datum & acceptum, is*
apparently false and impertinent, and is the main thing that hath
perplexed all discourses of this Article: Much less that *all the*
obligations of scandal proceed purely from that extraordinary height
of charity and tenderness, of good nature, &c. Nor yet that *if it*
proceed from humour, or pride, or wilfulness, or any other vicious
principle, then is the man to be treated as a peevish and stubborn
person; and no man is bound to part with his own freedom, be-
cause his neighbour is froward and humourous, &c. I perceive by
many such passages as these, that we differ in Doctrinals as well as
in Ceremony, from some that are for our suffering; yea that in-
deed we are not of the same Religion: For love is the life of our
Religion. And our love is not not so limited and narrow a kind of
love, nor so feeble and impotent as this here described; much less
do we number it with things indifferent, or that are left to our
liberty, or with those that some call either works of Supereroga-
tion, or of Evangelical perfection, as answering to counsels and
not to commands. We are not ashamed of our judgment in this
point, whoever shall account it heresie or error, we hold that it is
our duty to love our neighbours as our selves; and that this is not
an act of extraordinary charity (unless as the malice of uncharita-
ble men doth eventually make and denominate it *extraordinary*.)
But that it is essential to all true saving love, and common to eve-
ry true member of Christ that shall be saved. We believe that
this love must be extended to the proud and peevish, and unto our
very enemies; and therefore we pray (more conformably to the
Liturgy than such Conformists) that God will *forgive our enemies,*
persecutors and slanderers, and turn their hearts. Accordingly it
is part of our Religion, that we are obliged to do good to the *proud*
and peevish, as well as others; yea unto *all men* to the utmost of
our power; except those who by Law are taken out of our care,

by

by being destined to death for their crimes, whose bodies we may not endeavour to save, but their souls are as much under our necessary duty as others; we hold that even a Traytor, Murderer or Felon, going to the Gallows, must be so far loved, pitied and helped, that we must do much more than forbear a thing indifferent to save their souls. For we long ago received *Pauls* opinion, that we should rather chuse never to eat flesh while we lived, than to hinder their Salvation for whom Christ died. We believe very confidently, that if a proud or peevish man were cutting his own throat, or hanging or drowning himself, that by an *ordinary* obligation common to men, we are bound in charity to do our best to save his life, to cut the rope, to pull him out of the water, though we lost for it the *liberty* of a lawful *game*, or *feast*, or *rest*, yea, though it must cost us dear. And we believe that if we do not this, we do not only fail of an *extraordinary height of charity*, but that we are *murderers*; and that we do not only cross the *tenderness of good nature*, but common humanity; we cannot deny but we take him for a beast, and worse than an Infidel, that will not only famish his family, but stand by and let them cut their own throats, if he can but say, *they are stubborn, proud and peevish, or drunk*; or that will see his *neighbours* drown or hang themselves, if they do it in *pride*, or *peevishness*, or *stubbornness*, rather than he will forsake his liberty in a thing indifferent. And therefore it is contrary to our *Religion* to sell a *soul* (much more many thousands) for a Ceremony. We take the sixth Commandment to mean, *Thou shalt not murder the good or the bad, the patient or the peevish, by commission or by omission*. And as much as Souls are more worth than Bodies, and everlasting life than temporal, so much the greater sin do we take it for, to be the murderers of *Souls* by omission, than of *Bodies*. And that it will be an insufficient excuse for omisive soul-murdering, to say, *He was peevish, and I should have parted with my freedom*. Could we once think that *doing no harm* is all our necessary Religion, and that doing good is only the work of an *extraordinary height of charity*, then we could be in this of another mind (and could think a stone or tree more Religious than a mortal Saint.) But we have not so learnt to be Religious.

2. And indeed we think that this opinion would almost excuse the whole world from works of charity to any, at least except Ideots and Infants. For (to confess all our cross opinions freely) we deny not but that we hold the Doctrine of *Original sin* as in-

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by being destined to death for their crimes, whose bodies we may not endeavour to save, but their souls are as much under our necessary duty as others; we hold that even a Traytor, Murderer or Felon, going to the Gallows, must be so far loved, pitied and helped, that we must do much more than forbear a thing indifferent to save their souls. For we long ago received *Pauls* opinion, that we should rather chuse never to eat flesh while we lived, than to hinder their Salvation for whom Christ died. We believe very confidently, that if a proud or peevish man were cutting his own throat, or hanging or drowning himself, that by an *ordinary* obligation common to men, we are bound in charity to do our best to save his life, to cut the rope, to pull him out of the water, though we lost for it the *liberty* of a lawful *game*, or *feast*, or *rest*, yea, though it must cost us dear. And we believe that if we do not this, we do not only fail of an *extraordinary height of charity*, but that we are *murderers*; and that we do not only cross the *tenderness of good nature*, but common humanity; we cannot deny but we take him for a beast, and worse than an Infidel, that will not only famish his family, but stand by and let them cut their own throats, if he can but say, *they are stubborn, proud and peevish, or drunk*; or that will see his *neighbours* drown or hang themselves, if they do it in *pride*, or *peevishness*, or *stubbornness*, rather than he will forsake his liberty in a thing indifferent. And therefore it is contrary to our *Religion* to sell a *soul* (much more many thousands) for a Ceremony. We take the sixth Commandment to mean, *Thou shalt not murder the good or the bad, the patient or the peevish by commission or by omission*. And as much as Souls are more worth than Bodies, and everlasting life than temporal, so much the greater sin do we take it for, to be the murderers of *Souls* by omission, than of *Bodies*. And that it will be an insufficient excuse for omisive soul-murdering, to say, *He was peevish, and I should have parted with my freedom*. Could we once think that *doing no harm* is all our necessary Religion, and that doing good is only the work of an *extraordinary height of charity*, then we could be in this of another mind (and could think a stone or tree more Religious than a mortal Saint.) But we have not so learnt to be Religious.

2. And indeed we think that this opinion would almost excuse the whole world from works of charity to any, at least except Ideots and Infants. For (to confess all our cross opinions freely) we deny not but that we hold the Doctrine of *Original sin* as in-

herent in all the seed of *Adam*; and we must have pardon in our Nonconformity for Conformity so far to the Scriptures and the Articles and Doctrine of the Church of *England*, and of the Universal Church. And therefore we hold that the whole nature of man is corrupted from the womb with *some vicious Principle*; yea more than so, with the particular Principles of *pride, humour, and stubbornness, and peevishness*. And therefore that according to this rule, which we dissent from, all the world should be suffered to be hanged and damned for ever, rather than a Conformist should lose a game at Chess, or a cup of Sack, or abate a Ceremony. Because if it proceed from *humour, pride or peevishness, or any other vicious principle*——no man is bound to part with his own freedom, because his neighbour is froward and humourous.

And we hold, that there are few men, or none, that have lived so innocently, but that (if *Original sin* were denied) they have by practice contracted *some vicious principles*, even of *pride, and humour, and frowardness*. And we hold that it was to cure such viated souls, and such principles, that Christ came into the world, and that he made the Gospel, and instituted the Ministry; and that we are workers under Christ in this work; and that this seeking and saving of that which is lost, even of the proud and froward, and humourous, and peevish, is the very employment of our office. And that none of these are that blasphemy of the Holy Ghost that maketh sin unpardonable and incurable. And that though *dogged* hearing us, and *swinish contempt* of the Gospel it self, may excuse us from further importunity with some, and allow us to shake off the dust off our feet against them; yet so will not every *vicious principle*, nor the *frowardness* and *humour* here described. Nor yet will a particular *humour* or *peevishness* allow us to neglect the souls of them, that in the main have received the Gospel of Salvation. I confess we are of the number of them that *mourn for the reproach* of those pitified Churches, where the Pastors are of these opinions, and think that if all the Children of Christs family be but *peevish and froward*, the Nurses may let them all sin and be damned, and not part with any of their freedoms to cure them, or to save them. Were I also of this opinion, I should not stick to make *merchandize of souls*, and to sell an hundred for a Benefice, and twenty thousand for a Bishoprick, nor to give over Preaching to prevent my suffering, were souls so contemptible, and of so little value.

And consequently we think that the School-distinction of *Scandal given and taken*, is not so false and impertinent as is here said. The sense of the distinction is, that the fault is sometimes in the *giver*, and sometimes only in the *taker*. *Scandal* being a *snare*, a *trap*, a *stumbling-block*, or a temptation to sin; we think there are several sorts of *scandal*: First, *Scandal given* is by *actions otherwise sinful* (for its no wonder if one sin be a temptation to another) or by *actions sinful only in this*. And that *scandal* is, 1. When the *action* otherwise lawful is purposely intended as a snare or temptation. 2. When it is not so intended but hath a strong natural tendency in it self to tempt, and being unnecessary, is the effect of great inadvertency, carelessness, rashness, and want of love to others souls. But *scandal taken and not given*, (that is, not *culpably given*) is, when it is either from a necessary duty of ours, or from a thing so harmless as that there is no probability that it should be a temptation to any but those that go out of their way to seek for matter of temptation to themselves, by an extraordinary perverseness. We think it no false distinguishing to say, that it is one thing to lay a trap or dig a pit purposely for men to fall in; and another thing rashly and carelessly to dig a pit and cover it, to catch wild beasts in, in the common high-way, or very near it; and another thing to dig a pit quite out of all ordinary passage of men, where yet a drunkard, or one that will seek a pit to leap into, may possibly find it. *Scandalum datum* is that which charity and prudence bind men carefully to prevent; and *Scandalum acceptum* is that which ariseth not from any omission of the duty of him from whom it is taken. But more of this anon. We have told you our Religion, but we are not now disputing against yours. If the naming of such opinions be confutation enough, the owners have confuted them themselves. If it be not, let them pass. Our work at present is only Apology, (though we are tainted too with the disputing disease.) And so much for our Reasons for Preaching Christs Gospel against mens will. The sum of all is this, It is an indispensable duty lying on us as men and Ministers, by the obligation of Gods Law of Charity, and as Ministers, also by the obligation of our own Vows or self-dedication at our Ordination, to do our best in the exercise of all our talents, Humane, Christian, and Ministerial, to seek to save the peoples souls, and so to preach, or teach, and exhort them in the manner which most conduceth thereto, when and where our teaching is truly and evidently necessary.

But now in the Kings Dominions our teaching is to these ends truly and evidently necessary, therefore it is our duty so to teach.

III. **B**Ecause many of your contrary Reasonings are already answered before, I will here annex the rest, that they may not have the disadvantage of too great a distance.

1. *Obj. Your own preciseness and censoriousness maketh the common people seem mostly ignorant and prophane to you, and then you pretend a necessity of your Preaching, when you do but feign it, by setting your selves more above your neighbours than there is cause.*

Ans. 1. I confesse that many of the Separatists are truly guilty of what you here object. For when they have Unchurched whole Parishes of men whom they know not, nor ever heard speak for themselves, we that have come after them have found abundance of the people much better than they imagined. But one error or extreame will not justifie another: Remember that we are not now talking of mens qualifications for visible Communion in the Church, but of their necessity of being taught. And we censure none beyond such cogent evidence as is not in our power now to be ignorant of. I beseech you deal openly with us, and answer us these few Questions, and all the matter will be ended.

1. If men do not know who Christ is, or what he came into the world for, nor what he hath done for us, nor what the Holy Ghost is, nor what he is to do for us, nor what a Saviour or a Sanctifier is, nor what is the plain sense of most Articles of the Creed, or Petitions in the Lords-prayer, have such men need of Teaching to save their souls, or not?

2. If men follow the world eagerly all the week, and talk of it on the Lords day, and love not to hear any talk of another world, or how they must be pardoned and saved; but swear, and curse, and rail, and many of them are drunkards, gluttons, or fornicators; and if they never teach their children or families, or pray with them any more than Infidels, and shew no Religion but going to Church, or perhaps sometimes say the Lords-prayer and the Creed without understanding; and if we advise them to prepare for death, and the life to come, and tell them the need of a

Savi.

Saviour, a Sanctifier, and of faith, repentance, and a holy life, they tell us, that they will trust God with their souls, and not trouble their heads with things so high; they shall speed as well as their neighbours. Have these mens souls any need of teaching?

3. If any of the people so much love their drunkenness and fornication, and other gross sins, that they hate the Minister that seriously, though gently, reproveth them, and like *Cain* would see their brothers blood if he offer God a more acceptable sacrifice than themselves, or slander and hate the most conformable Minister that is but strict and seriously Religious, and is talking against them on all occasions; have these mens souls any need of exhortation, or not?

4. If many of the people be weak in judgment that mean well, and have only a glimmering confused knowledge of most of the greatest matters of Religion; and though we hope well of their sincerity, they have abundance of mistakes and sad miscarriages in their lives, and are inclined to most of the real errors which the *Debate maker* reciteth, and in danger of being carried into any opinions, which are offered by men who by nearness or plausibility of perswasion, come to them with any great advantage, yea and are like to be troublers of the Church, have these men need to be taught or not? Let us but be once agreed, that the *true belief, consent and performance* of our Baptismal Covenant is *necessary ordinarily to mens salvation, and that without faith it is impossible to please God; and that except a man be regenerate of the Spirit as well as of water, and except he be converted and become as a little child, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; and that he that hath not the Spirit of Christ is none of his; and that they that are in the flesh cannot please God, because the carnal mind is enmity against him; and that without holiness none shall see the Lord; and that if the Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost; and how can they hear without a Preacher, &c.* Agree but to this, or any of this, and sure our case is fair for a good issue. *Mark 16. 16. Heb. 11. 6. Job. 3. 3, 5, 6. Mat. 18. 3. Rom. 8. 6, 7, 8, 9, 13. Heb. 12. 14. 1 Cor. 4. 3. Rom. 10, &c.*

5. And for the matter of fact, may a man that hath conversed among such people all his life-time, and been familiar with them daily, and that can hardly get a servant into his own house that is much better, or hardly in a years time get a servant to understand his Baptism, or a quarter of his Creed; or a Minister that hath made

made it his work every week to discourse about these matters with all the families in his Parish, may such a man believe his own ears and eyes, or may be not? If not, he is capable of being a *Papist*, and believing Transubstantiation: If yea, the business is determined so far as his acquaintance reacheth.

6. And if the same man live in many Counties, and travel over most of the land, and find most places, as far as he can perceive, to be worse than the Parish which he had thus tried? and if all the painful Pastors that he talketh with, that ever tried it, and all the most judicious Christians of all Countries, tell him that their experience is the same; yea, if the great Divines of the Church have long made the same complaints in their Printed Sermons, may any of all these be believed or not?

7. If at this day the Divines that are angry with us for Preaching, do make almost as sad complaints even of the people that we Preach to our selves, or of the Puritans or Nonconformists: and if the most grave and reverend of the Conformable Divines do now in their Sermons to the people, describe them as aforesaid, and much worse; yet may we not believe that they have need of teaching?

If all this, and all that is said be *nothing* with you, we have nothing to say. But if it be, we are agreed, or at least you yield the cause to us, that know these things.

A man of fourscore years old in the Town where I was Teacher, being asked what God the Father was, said, He was a good man in Heaven. And being asked what God the Son was? said, He was the Sun, and pointed to the Sun that shined. And being asked what the Holy Ghost was? said, the *Moon*. A wise and worthy neighbour-Minister told me, That the oldest man that ever he knew, judged about sixscore (having fled thither in his youth from another Country for some crimes, and the old men of the Parish never knew him but an old grey-headed man) being in sound understanding before his death, and being asked by this Minister, Whither he thought to go when he died? answered, To the Church-yard I believe they will carry me. And when he was asked what he thought would become of his soul? he answered to this purpose, as not knowing whether he had any soul or not; but if he had, whether it would go to the Moon, or what would become of it, it was not for him to know.

The Parish from which I was sent to Goal (for exhorting them, and not swearing) can witness, that they have heard their ancient grave and reverend Pastor, and a Dean, &c. tell them in the Pulpit, That he thought they were all Heathens, and there was no Religion amongst them, and despairing of Catechising them, (because some came not two or three days) gave it over many years ago. To say nothing whether some were well Excommunicated for not Communicating with such a Church of Heathens, I only ask, Whether such a people had no need of teaching?

Obj. We grant that all have need enough of Teaching: But what can your teaching do more than other mens? You think so highly of your selves, as if men cannot be saved unless they be taught by you? Do not we teach them the saving truth?

Ans. 1. This is sufficiently answered before: The best School-master in England that hath a thousand, four thousand, ten thousand Scholars, will have need of help: will you say thus in any other case? Why may not one Physician or Apothecary in a City, one Soldier in an Army, one Seaman in a Ship, one Magistrate in London, &c. serve turn as well as many? Many may do more than one alone; and it is not mens anger that will hide the disparity of grace or abilities, by which one man is fitter than another.

2. Judg but by your own experience: Do you not see that the people are yet ignorant and uncured? Hath your Ministry done that which maketh the help of others needless, yea or no? If it have not, why should you hate assistance, or think that help will do no good? If a Physician have tried his best remedies, and yet his Patient is visibly uncured, he will sure be willing that another shall try also, and do his best, rather than leave his Patient desperate.

3. But if you are but willing to know the truth, you may be presently thus convinced, that it is not as *Nonconformists* at all that we are followed or valued by those that I am now speaking of, or that we expect success with. In one of those Parishes where we complain of raw and lifeless Preaching, let but a clear, convincing, able Teacher come and Preach, and let not the common people know whether he be Conformable or not, and you shall see that they make as great a difference as I am talking of. Let him be a
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Conformable man also, and let them know it, except those partial persons that I am not now speaking of, the common hearers will applaud him above the Parson of the Parish that is cold and dry. This differencing of Preaching among your selves sheweth, why it is that the common people do so willingly, where they have liberty, hear the *Nonconformists*. Alas, they have no prejudice against you antecedently, nor no such mind for Nonconformity as to be partial for them, (for they know not well what it is); why is it in *London* that the Congregations are so crowded, where *Bishop Wilkins*, *Dr. Stillingfleet*, *Dr. Tillotson*, *Mr. Wells*, *Dr. Outram*, *Dr. Gifford*, *Dr. Horton*, and such other Conformists Preach? The soul of man will have a rational gust, and will not think all that they hear to be equally convincing, clear, effectual and good, when men have done all that they can against it.

3. *Obj. We confess the peoples necessity, and that there is a difference of Teaching: But your Teaching will not supply this necessity; yea, it doth more harm than good.*

1. *Some of you preach sedition and faction.* 2. *And others of you disaffect the people towards the Parish Ministers. It is you that have put all the scruples into their heads, and then you pretend that their weakness and partiality doth necessitate your Preaching. How came it into their heads to think ill of Bishops, and to scruple Ceremonies, and Corporation-Oaths, but by you?* 3. *And when you have done, you rather cherish all this, than plainly seek to cure them of it. Go preach for Conformity, and you may have liberty.*

Ans. Whether all this be true or not (being matter of fact) and because it hath been published of my self by name, and because they judg of the rest of the *Puritans* and *Presbyterians* (as they will needs call them) by me, I take it to be my duty as for my self and others, to answer this more Historically than otherwise I should think convenient.

1. *Is it justice to charge men with seditious Preaching that never were accus'd or convict of any such Doctrine before any competent Judg? If any man preach sedition, heresie or schism, convict him, and let him suffer for it. The Law is open, and the Judges are not partial for Nonconformists. And you may have more witnesses against us by how much the more publicly we are allowed to Preach.*

2. Do you think that men cannot differ from your opinions, unless we put it into their heads? I know not how to confute you but by experience: 1. I must needs assure you, that upon my experience above thirty years, the people are much proner to Separation, and to think very hardly of the Liturgy and Ceremonies, than the Ministers be. Insomuch that it hath been my wonder many a year to observe it, that when we have but awakened the Consciences of ignorant and sensual persons to repentance, shortly, e're we are aware, they fall on scrupling Ceremonies, and disliking the Liturgy, when we know of none that put them on it. But the openest cause that ever I could observe (if you can bear publick Historical truth) is this: As soon as they repent of an ungodly worldly life, and begin to have serious thoughts of another world, they are apt in their ignorance to judg of *things* by *persons*; and when they are convinced of a great difference between a life of faith and of sense, and between the sober, righteous, godly, and the intemperate, unrighteous and ungodly, they presently mark what way these several people go in the matters of Worship which are past their own understandings. And when they have seen in most places the deoboist and vicious people to be great haters of strictness, and so of Puritans, and of Religious Exercises in any way but by forms, and see them so much for Bishops and Common-prayer, and then see some severities exercised against those that have lived most strictly, they presently suspect that Bishops are the suppressors of the most Religious, and the encouragers of those that need reformation, and that Forms and Ceremonies are but the means to quiet the ungodly in their want of the truth and life of Godliness, and to make them think themselves religious. These are the ways of the peoples receiving prejudice against you, as far as ever I could discern, which I write not in approbation, But Historically. And I ever found that those Bishops and Pastors that most encouraged serious Godliness, such as Bishop *Hall*, *Potter*, *Davenant*, *Morton*, &c. were revered by the people. And the names of *Jewel*, *Abbot*, *Grindal*, *Parry*, *Babington*, *Pilking-ton*, and many more such, are still venerable among the Puritans, as you call them.

But I cannot speak so certainly of any ones case as my own: I will give you the true Narrative of my Education, and leave it to you to judg, what put the Principles of Nonconformity into my head. I was never bred up under any Nonconformable Minister;
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from the age of six till ten, I had four School-masters, Curates of the place successively, that read Common-prayer; two never Preached, the other two seldom; but the two more learned drank themselves into beggery and left us. I came then to live at the habitation of my ancestors. There I found one Sir *William Rogers* about fourscore, Parson of two places twenty miles distant, that never Preached (they told me) in all his life; when his sight failed, he said the Common-prayer by rote; and he that read all the Scriptures was a poor day-labourer of the place; and the next year when he gave over, a Taylor read it. After him a pretended Minister, Grandchild to the Parson, took the whole Cure, but never Preached once. The Son of the old Parson also was there sometimes a Minister, that is a Reader, and a famous debauched Stage-player. At this time a Son of the next Neighbour turned Minister, and exceeded them so far that he undertook to Preach, and had a Benefice a great way off, whence after many years scandal he fled upon a discovery that one of the forementioned had forged his Orders. The next Curate (that did all that there was done) and my School-master, was another Neighbours Son, who being set to be a Lawyers Clerk drunk himself into such necessity that he was fain to turn Curate. When ever he came in drunk, we knew it by our smarts, being sure to be whipt. He never Preached in my time there but once, which was the terriblest Sermon that ever I heard, to hear a man drunk in the Pulpit (or else he had not ventured to Preach) to talk a deal of stark nonsense upon so terrible a Text, as *Mat. 25. Come ye blessed and go ye cursed.* Our next Parson was no Nonconformist neither. And then I was taken into the tuition of a grave and eminent man, of high esteem among great men, who expected verily to have been a Bishop. He loved me well; but so far frustrated my expectation, that in almost two years time he neither read to me, nor instructed me one hour, but discoursed usually of the unlearned factious Puritans. In his study (which was all my help) I remember not one *Greek Book* but the Testament, nor one Father but *Austin de Civitate Dei*, nor any of the Councils but ordinary *English* and *Neoterick* Divines; and he studied little all the year but Bishop *Andrews* Sermons. Hitherto I had no Nonconformists Principles. And if you suspect my own Father, it is enough to say, that he only read the Scriptures in his house, and scarcely any other Book, and I never heard any prayer (out of the Pulpit) but a form till I was about seventeen years of age.

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But because my Father would not drink and swear with them, and restrained us from the dancing-place on the Lords-day that we might read the Scriptures that while, and sometimes would speak of God and Scriptures, and the life to come, he was by the drunkards and rabble of the place reviled by the names of Precisian and Puritan, as bitterly as any Nonconformist now, though he never scrupled any point of Conformity, nor spake against it. And hearing all the drunkards revile that which I knew to be good, as Puritanism, I liked that name no whit the worse. But lest you think that the experience of such Priests did disaffect me, I shall add, that though there was another such an old Reader that never Preached in the same Parish at another Church, and very many Parishes round about us had the like, yet three neighbour-Ministers, venerable for age, (dying two above eighty years a piece, and the third near it) and very worthy godly Conformists, who were my most profitable acquaintance, did keep me from the principles of Nonconformity. Of whom (though they had all much rather have been rid of it, and so were before they died) one was a learned great disputer for Conformity, and was my chief Tutor, and did so engage me in reading *Dr. Burgess*, *Mr. Sprint*, *Bishop Downham* for Episcopacy, *Mr. Hooker*, &c. that I was not at all in doubt of the matter; and with this satisfaction I was Ordained and did subscribe. But I had never read any thing on the other side, nor ever read the Book of Ordination, nor exactly weighed what I subscribed to: But being satisfied that Episcopacy was the only Government, and that Ceremonies and Liturgy were lawful, I thought I was not bound to seek after objections and difficulties, and to fill my head with scruples, but to go on quietly as I begun. But when I came into another County, I met with divers private poor men that were very zealous Nonconformists, against whom I was so forward a Disputer, that the first Controversie that ever I wrote on, was against a Minister of one of theirs, which condemned Kneeling at the Sacrament, which I confuted so as to silence the opponents. (Mr. *Paybody* having fully satisfied me in that.) But yet they brought me to resolve to read the writings of both sides impartially, especially *Dr. Ames* his *Fresh Suit*; so that setting upon the Controversie again with my most serious studies, I settled in the judgment which I never since changed, about Liturgy and Ceremonies, expressed after in my 5 *Disput.* of Church-Government; but still I was absolutely for Episcopacy as

it is with us, till 1640. when the new Canons came out with the &c. Oath, and that was the very thing that occasioned such Nonconformity as I am guilty of at this day. For when my mind was before quiet, in the way that I was in, (being at *Bridgnorth*, where six Parishes were under an Ordinary and Court of their own, exempt from the Bishops Jurisdiction, so that I never used Crosse or Surplice, having liberty to forbear them), when I saw that I must swear, the reverence of an Oath excited me to an exacter scrutiny. I thought, as in subscribing I wrote but my opinion, which did not provoke me to so strict a search, so when I must swear, *That the Government by Archbishops, Bishops, Deans, &c. was that which ought to be, and that I would never consent to change it*; Without so much as excepting, *If the King himself would have a change*; it was time for me well to understand what I did. For I supposed that he that feared not an Oath, feared not God; and that he that would venture on perjury, would stick at no sin in the world as sin; and was unfit for humane converse. Whereupon we appointed a meeting of the Ministers about it; and Mr. *Carrwright* (afterwards of *York*) disputing for the Oath, did not satisfy me, but I resolved now to hear what both sides said, before I would bind myself by an Oath for all my life ensuing. Whereupon I got *Gersom Bucer de Regimine Eccles. & Altare Damascen.* and *Paul Bains Diocesans Trial*, and *Parker de Polit. Eccles.* and others. And on the other side *Saravia*; and *Bilson*; and *Andrews*; besides *Hooker* and *Downham* before mentioned. And the effect of my most impartial study was, that there is an Episcopacy of venerable antiquity, and desirable in the Church, if not of Divine Institution; but so far unlike the present frame of the *English* Hierarchy, that they are neither the same, nor yet consistent; as I express my thoughts in the foresaid Disputes.

And thus I have told you who put these scruples into my head. Had you not driven me to swear, I had never been like to have so scrupled. And I am confident if men were not driven so much to subscribe and swear as they are at this day, and their Consciences thus awakened to search, and scrupulosity, but the Agenda of Religion might be only *Agenda*, and the doing of them might serve the turn, you would have had much fewer scruplers and Nonconformists.

But you'll ask, How came those Lay-men to scruples, whom I before mentioned, if not from Ministers? I must still answer you

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Historically. There were but two Nonconformists in all those Countrys then. One was one Mr. *Aikins*, my neighbour, who would never talk either for it or against it, but almost always talk so seriously of *Heaven*, and a *Heavenly life* that you could scarce get him to talk much of any thing else. The other was that most excellent Disputant *John Ball*; to whom some of the men that I speak of went purposely to be strengthened by him against some arguments used by the Conformists. And he perceiving their humour to be set towards faction and Ceremonious disputes, did so School them, and rebuke their factious humour, that they would never come at him more. And I my self still perceived in some of the younger hotter sort, so much inclination to censoriousness, and siding and self conceit, that I almost still opposed them when we met, and set my self to repress their confidence, and to bring them to better thoughts of the Conformists. And so much to that part of your charge, that it is *we* that put these scruples into their heads, when I confess, I think, *It is you*.

But you chide us because *we persuade them not to conformity?*

Ans. Either you mean so much of Conformity as we can conscientiously yield to our selves, or that which we judge our selves to be unlawful. The later no sober man can expect from us till our own judgments are changed. And verily it must be reasoning that hath more cogent evidence than yet you have shewed us, that must do that (though for confidence and contempt of dissenters we desire no more in you) We are *men* as well as you, and we study as hard as you, and though you deny it, we think as impartially. And which side hath more to byas them, is not hard to judge. You think we are byassed by mens *applause*. But I pray you forget not (for here it concerneth you *esse memores*) what a few contemptible people you think it is whose applause doth byas us? And that it is not the richer or greater sort, or the greater number as you think. And remember, if we were hypocrites, how poor and dry a reward we should have in such mens estimation. And that poverty and reproach, and jealousies, and voluminous defamations, and Prisons, are put with these poor mens estimation into the Scales to byas us. And whether any man in *England* believe, that Bishoppicks and Lordships, Honour and Wealth, with the reverence of so great and so many as you suppose do reverence you, are not a stronger byas to sway an hypocrite to betray his Conscience, than ours is? Alas, that obloquy should live upon such airy food, and uncharitableness glory of so thin a cloak!

But if it be *separation and things that we judge unlawfully*, that we should unteach the people to do you service, or to serve the Church, I will not say as they that tell you, that it is somewhat hard usage to persuade us by poverty, and prisons, and silencing, to lose our friends to gratify them that thus abuse us; and to take pains to exchange kindness for cruelty, and to strive hard to leap out of the ashes into the fire. But I will tell the truth to the world and you; we do what you desire of us, or reasonably can desire. I constantly Preached till the Goal restrained me, against Separation, and much more against sedition and rebellion. We do it openly and plainly. I am the man that am reproached in Print for want of this. And the same hand so far justified me, as before the Kings Majesty, and Lords, and before the Right Reverend Bishops, to say of me and my Disputes of Church-Government, about the Ceremonies, &c. *No man hath written better of these things.* And can we speak louder than by the Press? Or can they prove that we preach not as we write! O wonderful! that ever the world can degenerate to so much unrighteousness as to condemn men upon such defamations as these! Besides that Book, many a year before and since, I have still written to the same purpose: I have Preached to the same purpose. But thinking it more seasonable in private Conference, I have an hundred, and an hundred times more pleaded for the like in private. And my Disputes before mentioned are accused by many offended persons, as having made a hundred Ministers at least conformable. And had they not been written in the very height of Usurpation before the Kings return, I should have been taken for the vilest temporizer. This is our course; and yet if *wrath and partiality*, and *ill will*, do but dream that we do infect the people, and cherish them in Separation, and do not contradict but flatter them in their extreams, against our own judgments, the world must ring of all these dreams, and they think it fit that we be used as if all were certain truth. We have need to bless our selves against dreaming neighbours, if we must be estimated, and used, and described to the world, according to their dreams.

Nay, I will tell the world here the certain truth of our success and usage. I preach, I write, and I frequently and openly talk against Separation, and for the lawfulness of joining with the Church in the use of the Liturgy, and to rebuke mens extreams and censures of the Episcopal Clergy, and for an impartial love of all

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true Christians. I sharply reprove the weak reasonings of those that are otherwise minded; and by this I occasion the true Sectarians every where to speak against me; and yet even these Sectaries with me well, and would do me no harm; and the generality of my hearers bear all this well, and seem to be of the same mind. And yet when I am loved by those that I plead against, I am reviled and abused by those that I plead for. Yea more, I must profess it before the world, that I plead your cause as far as conscionably I can, and its you that hinder me, and none like you. You would have us do your work with the people, and you would not let us do it. You use us, as I saw a man lately do by a Colt, who tyed him fast to a great tree, and lashed him most cruelly to make him draw. You make our work difficult if not impossible, and then think us worthy of your smarting wrath, for not performing it. Were it not for two things, we could do much to reconcile the people to you.

1. If you would not impose those Oaths, Subscriptions, and such like burdens, which we are our selves unable without fraud and falsehood to defend.
2. If you would not silence their faithful Teachers, but would encourage Godliness and good men impartially, and would exercise *LOVE* as openly and largely as you exercise *WRATH*.

But we must tell the world and you, that we are unable, utterly unable to justify the *Corporation-Oath and Declaration*, and to bring the people to like those Bishops whom they think are the chief cause of depriving of them of their long tried painful faithful Pastors, and setting over them such as in too many places are set. When our people are in Goals for meeting as they have done these twenty, yea thirty or forty years, only to repeat their Teachers Sermon, and pray and sing a Psalm together between the publick Exercises on the Lords-day (where they have reverently attended.) It is a hard task that you put on them to like you, but a harder that you put on us, that we must Preach them to it, even when we must not Preach at all. That we must go to the Goals to them, or after they come out, to their houses to teach them to like the Bishops and their Impositions! They will tell us, *We love them with a love of Benevolence; as we must our enemies; we wish them no harm, but the greatest good; but we cannot love them as such complacently, nor think approvingly of their ways.* Whether you do well or ill in promoting their sufferings, I am not now judging; I only tell you that it is the greatest hinderance to our reconciling them.

them to you, and your ways, that you could easily have devised. I never saw that wooing speed well, that said, *Love me, or I will send thee to Gaol.* When I was a child I never thought any correction more unreasonable than whipping children to make them give over crying, when whipping was an irresistible means to make them cry, if they had not cried before.

While I am Voluminously reproached for not reproving the spirit of Separation or Nonconformity, (as afore limited) when I did it last, I was sent to Prison; and when I would do it by Preaching, I have not leave. And if your meaning be, *Speak when we have shut thy mouth; and teach men to like us when they suffer our wrath,* you increase our task when you have taken away our straw.

I conclude therefore with repeating it: you will not suffer us to serve you as we can, but are our greatest hinderers while you blame us.

And lastly as to their scrupling the *Corporation, Declaration and Oath*, I can speak best for my self. The Bayliff, Justice, and all the twelve Capital Burgeesses (besides inferior Burgeesses) did refuse it, and were every one displaced, save one (now dead) that had been a Soldier in the Kings Army (what men were put in their stead, I am not now to tell you.) And they were so far from being persuaded to this by me (at almost an hundred miles distance) that I never once spake to them, nor wrote to them one Letter or word about it. And it being no part of the old Conformity, how could this be put into their heads by me? especially when they know that I had kept the Covenant from ever being put upon that Town and Country.

4 Obj But the issue sheweth how little good your Teaching doth! where are any more against Bishops and Conformity than your hearers? You make men hypocrites, and teach them to prate phrases, and cut faces, and rail at carnal reason, and this goeth for Godliness, when they are worse than you found them. And how have you cured all that ignorance of the people which you lament? If it be cured, that argument for the necessity of your Preaching is gone? If they are not cured, how can you yet think to cure them? therefore their necessity is no plea for your Preaching.

Ans. 1. Thus indeed the *Quakers* were wont to revile us in the open streets, and tell us our Preaching did no good; and they would point at a gaudy Coat, or any thing that they accounted pride or vanity, and cry out, See, this is the fruit of your Ministry. But through the great mercy of God, our success hath been such, that constraineth us thankfully to acknowledg his unspeakable mercy that ever called us to so blessed a work, though we had been sooner sed with the bread and water of affliction; And that under Usurpation it self, even while we wrote and preached against it, we had so many years liberty before we were silenced.

2. A *Town* and *Church* is not a being of the same materials from time to time, but like a river which consists of transient matter. Abundance are dead and got safe to Heaven, that we at first instructed, who are yet our comforts, being *saved* from this *unward generation*, and from this *present evil world*. And those that were children when I was last with that people, and taught them, are now men. And what need all these may have of teaching as well as their Parents had, I know not. But I am sure where I come, that ignorance doth prevail.

3. Knowledge is gotten by slow degrees, especially by the poor and vulgar. The School that hath been taught many years successfully, may have need of teaching still. The best are too ignorant, and the want of knowledge will appear in the wants of virtue, and obedience and good life.

4. You force us to answer this also Historically: But the best is we have witnesses enough upon the place. I will first speak of that success which you your selves desire, and then of that which we desired, and which some condemn.

1. This week I spake with a very learned, worthy, silenced Minister, who dwelleth in a great Market-Town in the West, who telleth me, of a multitude there that have been formerly otherwise minded, there is scarce two or three that now go not with him to the publick Parish-Worship.

When I was in *Kidderminster* I could have been more confident of the ruling of that people in equal ways; but since I came away, my silencing hath so disaffected them to the Bishops, more than I then left them, that multitudes will not communicate in the Sacrament in publick: I cannot come at them, nor I do not write to them, lest I offend those that think I do but seduce them. But those

that call on me, say, *We cannot embody our selves in Church-communion with such persecutors.* Especially since several of them have lain in the Goal; but before, they had no such argument to plead. Yet do I usually satisfie those that speak to me here in their travels. But that is but a few. But yet I hear not of four men and women in the Town that do not come to the publick Assembly.

I have told you, at *Alton* where I lived last, I knew not of three persons of all my hearers of that Parish that did not come to the publick Assembly, and join in the use of the Liturgy. So much for that part of our success.

2. But I will not deny to you that we define not Godliness by Conformity to Diocesans, or Ceremonies, and therefore have another kind of success which we first and more endeavour, which is to teach them the meaning of their Baptismal Covenant, and the Creed, Lords-prayer, and Ten Commandments; and to teach them to believe aright in Christ, and to love God above all, and their neighbour as themselves, and to live soberly, righteously and godly in the world, and to have their hearts and conversations in Heaven, and by the spirit to mortifie the lusts and deeds of the flesh. And if we can get them well to digest and practise thus much, we think we have not lost our labour; though they are not yet acute enough, to cut by so small a thred as some more subtle wits, nor to cleave a hair, nor to decide all Controversies about *Diocesans* and *ceremonies*. And seeing neither of these are in our Creed, we hold them no articles of our Faith, and therefore not necessary to our hearers Salvation.

And as to our success in this, the men themselves, and those that know them, and see their lives, are the fittest Judges. I meddle not with other men: I must say of my own hearers with humble thankfulness to God, that when I came to *Kidderminster* it was noted publicly for one of the rudest Towns in the County; and when I left them it was much otherwise. And to those that may say, *It is but in prating phrases, and cutting faces, and thinking themselves better than others:* I answer, 1. They were not Academicks, much less Doctors; they spake not artificially according to the rules of Rhetorick or Logick. They could not dispute well of the fixed Stars or Planets, the Vortices or Spheres, the Elements or Atoms, &c. And they are in their garb and speech as poor men are, both plain, and some of them rustical. And when they talk of Religion, some of them are not free from some such unaccurate

expressions, and uncogent arguings as in the Schools would make them ridiculous. And they pray not all in words so accurate (especially the youngest) as I could wish I could do myself. But some of them understand the Body of Divinity, and the Doctrinal Controversies too, which I have written on, and pray in so good order and expression, as I meet not now with one Parish-Minister of ten or twenty that excelleth them. Indeed those of them that fear God, do take themselves to be better and happier now than they were when they feared him not, or than drunkards, worldlings, and malicious enemies of Godliness are. And though they abhor the Pharisees hypocritical thanks, they think that unthankfulness to God for his grace is no virtue, nor thankfulness a vice or thing indifferent. They are eminent for humility; so far from a proud and preening vein, (when it was the temptation and disorder of the time) that I could never get one man of them to try his parts by one private Exercise that way; some from *Oxford* that admired them would have drawn some of them towards the Ministry; which made me wish them to a trial, but never could procure it. I never knew of one man that preached or expounded Scripture to others (unless in conference about the sense of a Text) in all the time that I was there. Though I am not one that condemn all that in their families do otherwise. They were not then noted for censorious to dissenters (unless two or three particular persons.) They addicted themselves to no parties, *sittings*, or *factions* in Religion. They that you call Puritans, and our followers, were neither *Episcopal*, *Presbyterians*, or *Independents*; but for plain *Christianity* and *Godliness* as such, and for the unity of all sober Christians, and to do their own duty, in that especially which all these parties did consent in. When I was removed from them, and they heard a stranger in the Pulpit crying out against them as *Presbyterians*, and a generation of *vipers*, &c. I hear they looked somewhat strangely at such strange kind of Preaching; what! the man meant to pretend to know their judgments better than they knew their own! When I never knew two whose judgments were for the *Presbyterian* Government in all the Town and Parish. They were in all this so unanimous and concordant, that when division shattered some other Parishes, there was not that I heard of one *Anabaptist*, one *Quaker*, nor of any different party at all among them, save that two or three in the War fell off from Christianity and all Religion, and became as a pillar of Salt unto all the rest. When I called them

to my house to be Catechised and instructed, there were very few families refused. And there were not, that I could hear of in the heart of the Town, above one or two families in a street-side that did not call on God; and daily worship him. The Lords-day they spent in publick Worship, and in repeating for memory what they heard, and in Praying and singing Psalms of praise. They lived in quietness, and had no Law-suits nor known contentions. None of them lived in wealth or worldly honours, none in idleness, few or none in begging, but in daily painful labour in their Callings, by which they lived from hand to mouth. Those few that were common drunkards in the Town (three or four that custom had made as beasts) were yet convinced that their neighbours were better and happier than they.

As to their *cutting faces*, I can say nothing to you, but that their tone was as decent as most Preachers I now hear, and their countenance as sober and well composed. But God most regardeth the compofure of the heart. But all that seemeth serious is to some men matter of scorn; and one lately telleth you, *That if you stop the Nonconformists mouths, no wonder if they speak through the nose.* And men will have more care to wash their faces, and compose their countenances in publick, than if you drive them into corners.

And for their *prating-phrases*, they are ambitious but of two excellencies of speech, the one is to speak their minds in that matter which may have the fullest signification, both of the *matter spoken*, and of the *speakers affections* about the matter; (for the use of speech is to express them both), the other is for *ornament*, and that is to speak in Scripture-phrase; not *abused* (any further than weakness causeth all the weak to do, even publick Preachers as well as others), but as well understood as they are able. And they that scorn at Scripture-phrase, should not conform to the Book of Ordination or Articles, where the Scripture sufficiency and perfection is confessed. If the phrase of the Scripture it self is not odious, neither is the sober use of it, where it is not perverted. But to such general charges, we can give no answer, but *nexa caput sequitur*; name the particular persons and words, and prove your accusation, and calumniate not the rest against whom no such proof is brought.

5. Obj. But what excellent Preaching or Labours have you to boast of more than others, that your Preaching must be thought so necessary? What did you when you did preach, but cast out Catechising, the Lords-prayer, the Creed, and the Communion in the Sacrament out of the Church, and bring the people to be almost Heathens; and cast out all true Discipline and Government, and substituted Presbyterian Examinations before the Sacrament, and rigor and tyranny which the people would not endure? and is this so necessary a thing?

Ans. These things indeed we read and hear from you very often; but another Judge must pass the final sentence. You make us pity the poor world in regard of the uncertainty of History. You put us upon the recital of our practice which will sound like the boasting of a fool. But if blessed *Paul* was put upon that which he calleth, *Speaking like a fool*; though they were not the words of folly, we must not murmur if we have the like inconvenience put upon us.

1. If the successes before described be nothing worth in your esteem, yet labour must be continued still; and we must in meekness instruct those that oppose, if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth, *2 Tim. 2. 25, 26.* And I suppose few Parish-Priests of my acquaintance will either judge themselves and their labours useless, or give them over, if the maintenance fail not of success; else how many empty Temples should we have? But you shall not so easily tempt us into utter unthankfulness for so great a mercy as our success beyond our expectation was.

I remember Dr. *Ames* telleth his Father in Law Dr. *Burgefs*, in his *Fresh Suit*, that Bishop *Morton* himself did silence old Mr. *Midsley* of *Rusdale* in *Lancashire* after God had blessed his Ministry with the Conversion of many thousand souls (and his Son after him he silenced also.) Whether you will think that this which he calleth conversion, being but from Popery, ignorance, sensuality and profaneness, be to be valued, or whether you will deny the publick matter of fact, I know not; but for my part I was glad to hear that he was not silenced till many thousands had been converted by him,

him. And O what abundance of success this way had the Ministry of Mr. *Hilderham*, Mr. *Nichols*, Mr. *Dod*, Mr. *Thomas Hooker*, Mr. *John Rogers* of *Dedham*, Mr. *Herring*, Mr. *Barlow*, and abundance more of the old Nonconformists? And what understanding excellent persons were Dr. *Ames*, Mr. *Bradshaw*, Mr. *John Ball*, Mr. *John Paget*, old *John Fox*, Mr. *Paul Bain*, Mr. *Parker*, &c. To say nothing of Mr. *Perkins*, Dr. *Humphrey*, Dr. *John Reynolds*, &c. who were more Nonconformists than I and those of my judgment are. Doubtless they were as like to know how to Preach, without either *prating-phrases*, or ignorant, unlearned, dry unedifying Sermons, tending to bring Christianity into contempt, as most (at least) of the Parish-Priests that I use to hear in any place where ever I come.

2. And as to our *own Preaching*, I confess we have little cause to boast of it. For my own part God knoweth I have seldom come out of the Pulpit without some grief and self-accusation, that I should stand there to speak as a Minister of Christ about so great a matter as the everlasting Salvation of the peoples souls, and that to men that are almost dying, and must shortly be all in an unchangeable state, where there is no more time of preparation for their final doom, and yet that I should speak with no more wisdom, life and fervency. That I do not every time importune the hearers with the greatest seriousness that my soul can reach unto, and with tears beseech the impenitent to consider, and with earnestness awaken stupid souls, at least to some regard of their Salvation, (though I were never so much derided for all this with all the reproaches that blinded malicious wit can invent) The Lord knoweth that if it had not been for the undeniable necessities of the world, which hath not *enow* that are fitter than my self, (though very unworthy) I had never entered into the Sacred Ministry; and after I was entered I had soon repented of it. We have upon our selves so penitent a sense of our own neglects, that hindereth us from flying in the face of those that silence us. We use not to others (whatever we now say to your selves) to talk of your faults herein so much as of our own. And we daily beg of God to pardon us, that we speak no more wisely and importunately in so great a case when we had time. And that we did not watch more diligently over the peoples souls, and teach them publicly, and from house to house day and night, in season and out of season, even with tears. And we daily pray that those that come in our places

places may be better than we have been, and may take warning by us, to be more studious and laborious.

But yet seeing you have left us no other answer, I shall Historically tell you the truth of our course, and leave it to the judgment (not of you, for you are partial, and some deride us, and some believe us not; nor yet of our *People*, for they know it, and therefore believe not the reproachers; but) of all indifferent sober men.

I remember when Mr. *Thomas Wadsworth* Minister at *Newington-Butts* was put out, the Parishioners came to me with a Petition to the King for some pity to their souls in his Restoration, and would have had me to have directed them how to get it delivered. I told them it was a thing not to be attempted, being contrary to the course of the present Laws, and so it never was delivered (that I know of.) But when I read it, I saw the difference between man and-man. They therein expressed that he had been a prudent, constant, painful Preacher to them, that he was of a most blameless exemplary life; that he spent all that he had in charitable works; that he visited, and instructed, and Catechised every family, house by house, that he hired a Minister to assist him in such private Catechising and instructing; that he bought Bibles to give all the poor of the Parish that could not buy them; with much more of the like. And he was not successless, nor is not since his silencing to this day. It would be endless to multiply such instances of the now silenced Ministers in this Land.

But because I am *Purus purus Puritanus*, as its said, and you will have it so that I must be named more than others, as one by whom the world may know the rest, even with an *Ex uno omnes*, to use some of your own expressions; I shall tell you what was my course, and how far I am guilty of the matter of these accusations.

1. My body being exceeding weak, I Preached but twice a week, once on the Lords-day, and once on the Market-day.

2. The Doctrine which I Preached being visible in above seventy Books, and my Religion described so fully in my *Reasons of the Christian Religion*, my *Confession*, and many other Treatises, I need not now repeat; nor plead for it to the world, that it is not heresie, nor *Phrase divinity* (as they now speak.) And whether *non sense*, other men that have sense must judge.

3. I had one or two Assistants with me, (who besides two sequestred Ministers and my self) were maintained out of the maintenance.

tenance of the Vicaridge (and at last an augmentation for a Chapel.) One of these Preached one part of the day with me, and the other twice at a Chapel near.

4. We never baptized a child without the profession of the Creed, (so that we did not cast out that); and we seldom prayed any day without concluding with the Lords prayer. And the Sacrament we administred oft. Indeed we kneeled not in the reception, because we had liberty to do as we thought fittest. But I openly told them that I judged kneeling not unlawful, nor would refuse any that did kneel on that account. But many came not, because the rest kneeled not, and they might not have it on a distinct day by themselves (which tended to division), but most because they were told of the (after mentioned) Discipline that would be used towards them.

5. At first we Catechised in the Church, where the Creed, Lords prayer and Decalogue were daily repeated. Afterward we took a more effectual course; all the families in the Town came to my house, and my Assistants went to their houses in the Parish (it being almost twenty miles about.) Mondays and Tuesdays half the day we constantly spent in this work, taking about fourteen families a week between two of us. We first heard them repeat the words of the Catechism, or at least of the Creed, Lords prayer and Decalogue. Next we tried how they understood some part of them. Then we a little with tenderness and modesty enquired of their *consent*, their *resolution*, and their thoughts of, and preparations for another world; and if any were ashamed to open their ignorance, we urged them not any further, but turned our speech to instruction and exhortation. And the superiors and ancients we examined not before their servants or children, but put those Questions, and used those Exhortations to their servants and children in their hearing which we desired them themselves to receive. And we still concluded with the most urgent exhortations for preparation for death and judgment that we were able; and when it was meet, engaging the ignorant, negligent and sensual, to sober promises of another course. And thus we usually spent about an hour with a family, in which I spent my self as much as in a Sermon at least. And through Gods mercy we seldom parted with them, without some signs of their present repentance, and purposes of amendment for the time to come. But our method being punctually described in the end of my *Reformed Pastor*, I shall say no more of it.

6. My Assistant in the Town Mr. *Sergeant*, was a man of so great prudence, piety, meekness, peaceableness, self-denial, and blamelessness of life, that I never to my remembrance saw him in anger, nor ever heard an offensive word from his mouth, nor ever saw or heard of an offensive (much less a scandalous) action done by him in all the years that he was there. I never heard him grudge at any labour, (when he travelled as aforesaid to all the houses of the Parish, and Preached usually twice each Lords-day, at three miles distance one from the other.) Nor did I ever hear man or woman blame him for any word or deed; nor ever heard him ask what money he should have, but took it as it came. And was indeed as a willing and loving servant unto all, and was beloved by all; (though we had many more affectionate taking Preachers.)

7. I gave to every family in Town and Parish (being beside a great Borough about twenty Villages) a Catechism, and some of my lesser Books, and of every Book I wrote usually as many as my Purse could well afford. And to every Family a Bible, which either for want of money, or of willingness to buy, had none, where any one in the house could read.

8. After the Lecture at evening, as many as had leisure and will, assembled at my Lodgings, where one of them repeated the Sermon; and any one that would did by word or writing, put in such doubts about the things delivered, the solution of which would tend to their further satisfaction, which I then answered. And if they had any other cases of Conscience, they offered them to me in writing (that I might see whether they were fit for publick mention), and then we sung a Psalm, and I or one of them did pray.

9. All the Ministers of the County whose names are Printed in our Book of *Concord*, did agree (seeing the Rulers that then were did leave all Discipline to the Churches will, and constrained none; and seeing we were divided about Church-Government, to the great damage of the Church), *That we would all practise so much of the spiritual discipline as all three parties, Episcopal, Presbyterian and Independents were agreed in*, (which we thought enough for our union and reformation) and leave the rest without the compass of our agreement; that so the Episcopal party might not say, that we break the Laws, or shut them out; nor the rest say, that our narrow principles excluded them from our Communion.

10. Accordingly, once a month I had a meeting to hear and admonish them that after more private reproof, had refused repentance for heinous and notable offences ; where were present three Justices of the Peace (as at their monthly meeting, to do that which belonged to the Magistrate, and see that we did not usurp their power) and above twenty of the Seniors of the Town and Parish, (not as Lay-Elders or Officers to vote, but as those of the people that had best leisure and advantage to see that we did the Church no wrong) and two or three Pastors, and three or four elected Deacons. Where our chief trouble was with drunkards, exhorting them to repentance, and praying with them, and to keep peace among the neighbours, and maintain their unity.

11. The next day of every month, the Neighbour-ministers met at the Lecture, and afterward at an Ordinary in an honest neighbours private house ; where if any of our Parishes obstinately refused repentance for drunkenness or such open heinous sin, he was gently admonished and exhorted before all the Ministers. But our usual work was a Disputation on some useful point in Divinity, to exercise and edify the younger sort, where were usually present about twenty, and among them some of the most learned, sober, Episcopal Divines that were in these parts, who were constant or frequent helpers of us, *Mr. Thomas Good, Mr. Mar. Johnson, &c.*

12. Those open great offenders who before these Ministers also refused to profess Repentance, I did three Lords-days as gently and affectionately as I could, admonish publicly before all the Church, and after that some days publicly prayed for their Repentance ; which if they refused not, they there confessed their sin, and desired the Churches prayers for their pardon and reformation. But if they still refused, I declared them unfit for the Communion of the Church, according to the Laws of Christ, and required the Church to avoid their Communion ; and we used no other Excommunication. But this discipline we used on none but those that consented to it before, and not over any that would rather forsake our Communion than submit to it, lest they should think I did them wrong.

13. The people of the place also did, for ought I know, as much as I, for the promoting of their neighbours good : 1. By their unity and concord. 2. By their humility and blameless lives. 3. They met in the houses of many of those that were able to help

help them; on *Saturday* nights, to call to mind the last Lords-days Exhortations; and on the Lords-days twice to repeat the Sermons preach that day, and sing a Psalm, and pray together, and no more.

The *Reasons* of these meetings I refer (not to the enemies of all things that savour of diligence for a mans soul, but) to all that know what a soul is worth, and what is due from the Creature to his Creator; and what is necessary to the information of an ignorant man.

1. Many families had no one that could read; and such were also the most ignorant; so that they could not do any thing in a holy use of the Lords-day but what they did at Church, unless they took their neighbours help. And *time* on any day is precious, and not to be cast away in vain.

2. These persons, and many more, could remember but little of a Sermon by once hearing; yea twice was too little with the most. And we preach not only to be *heard and admired*, but to edifie souls; and how great a discouragement is it to a faithful Minister, to bestow his time and labour in preparing and speaking that which so nearly concerneth his auditors, and to cast it as seed by the highway side, and to have it all die in the hearing, and carried no further than the Church-doors. If I taught a School of boys, or sent my servant but on certain businesses for my self, I should not be willing that all my words should go no further. And old ignorant men do hardlier learn than boys; and heavenly Doctrine is more hardly remembered than common business in the world.

3. If the Lords-day had been but a time of *leave* to use such helps, and not of *duty*, we should take it for a great mercy to have *leave* to spend that time in seeking God, and life everlasting, which else would be lost, or spent in trifles.

4. Our people were generally poor labourers, that could spare so little time for such things on the week-days (but what they did in their Shops at their work) that it must be now, or not at all.

5. Common charity and many Scripture-precepts oblige all good Christians to help to edifie and save their neighbours by all just and lawful means.

6. We found by great experience, that it greatly increased knowledg and obedience, and piety in the people.

7. And so far was it from causing sects or heresies, or contempt of Ministers, or private mens Preaching, that it was the chief of

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7. And so far was it from causing sects or heresies, or contempt of Ministers, or private mens Preaching, that it was the chief of

all means that ever I found successful against these exorbitancies ; so that when those Pastors that cried down such meetings as Conventicles, and restrained the people from meeting to repeat or pray, did thereby occasion them to go further in their undertakings than they ought: I still found that to let them do what belonged to them as private men, was the means to keep them from that which belonged only to the Ministers ; and needful meetings in their houses in due subordination to the Pastors and Church-assemblies, was the best way to keep them from schismatical meetings, which were in *opposition* to the Pastors and Church-assemblies. Yea, that to drive them hard on to their proper duty in their families, and for their ignorant neighbours, was the best way to convince them, that they had neither ability nor leisure for more, which belonged not to them. In a word, it was a principal cause that we had no sects nor divisions among us.

And now if any man come with his exceptions against such meetings as dangerous to the Church or State, I only answer him,

1. Try it as much as we have done, before you condemn you know not what. 2. Will you do nothing to help the people to Heaven, but that which is lyable to no abuse, or inconvenience ? Then Christ and the Gospel, and Scripture, and much more *Reason* it self must be renounced, which are all more abused than such private meetings. 3. See that you be not more afraid of sects, than of mens apparent ungodliness and damnation. 4. And see that *it be not* your own want of skill and diligence, that makes you oppose that means which you cannot guide and manage.

Obj. But this was not the common case of the Nonconformists: what do you tell us a long story of your doings, when it was otherwise throughout the land.

Ans. 1. You know that there were then many Sectaries in the land, and you may as well impute to us your own misdoings as theirs. We justify not the Sectaries in their principles or practices.

2. What was the *Doctrine* and practice of *Presbyterian* and *Independents*, the writings which they all agreed to, will partly tell you. In the Confession of Faith you see what *Doctrine* they agreed

to Preach. In the Catechisms they shew you that the Creed, Lords-Prayer and Decalogue, were not only to be learned by the people, but the sense and use also of them all. And is this casting them out of the Church? And in the Directory they advise to the use of the very words of the Lords-prayer in the Churches.

3. That I was not singular in this course, you may soon learn if you will but enquire what was done at *Bewdely, Stourbridg*, and other places round about me. Nay when our two Agreements, one for Catechising and personal Conference from house to house, and the other for common concord in Discipline, were subscribed by so many of all that County, and some adjoining, whose names are visible there in print, you may imagine they endeavoured to do what they subscribed to do.

4. Nor was it that County only; you may see in their Printed Agreements that the Ministers of *Westmorland*, and other Counties agreed much on the same courses. And *Essex, Wiltshire, Dorsetshire*, and many others, had begun the same work, from which the return of *Diocesans* hath released them.

And remember that the charge of *casting out all Discipline*; and of *Presbyterian examinations* and *severities*, are hardly reconcilable; nor yet the *not administering the Sacrament*, and the *examining of the people before the Sacrament*. But for our Countrys, we used not such examinations; because our foresaid ordinary Catechising and conference, and also our requiring a publick profession of the Christian faith and life, at the transition of the youth out of their state of *Infant-membership* into that of the adult, (described by me in my Treatise of Confirmation) did better answer their necessities.

6 Obj. But all this while you lived in *Sequestrations* upon other mens estates, and eat other mens bread, of which you never made restitution; and how then can you think your merits are such as may plead for your readmission: and in particular, *Mr. Durel* and many others have told the world and your self, that as a reward for your military service you had a good Benefice, out of which another only for his fidelity was cast out; with what conscience this was done, see you to it.

Ans. Reader, seeing it's the pleasure of *Mr. Durel*, and so many
more

more to call out the man, and cull out the matter with which the world must be thus troubled, I intreat thee to pardon my *personal narratives*, for which were it not that they lay the interest of so many of my Brethren, of my writings and office upon it, I could not pardon my self.

1. Let the world then know that these Ministers whom we succeeded were cast out by the Secular power that bore sway, and not by those that succeeded them. If you know of one Minister of a hundred that was the *agent* in that work, let that one, and not the innocent bear of it.

2. That the people of each Parish, or some of them, were the *accusers*, *witnesses*, and *solicitors* of the cause; who beg'd for deliverance, and a better Ministry, as if it concerned the benefit of their souls.

3. That it was somewhat an excusable error in the Ministers that succeeded them, to think that if the Parliament or any Usurpers, did turn out the former Ministers of any place, the people should not therefore be left as Heathens, and all Gods Worship be forsaken, and the doors shut up. as in the *Venetian* and other Interdicts by the Pope, and this for ten or twelve years together, yea almost twenty; and that if the Parliament had cast out the overseers of the poor, or the nurses of your children, it's hard that all they that after relieved them, and saved their lives, must be accused as so greatly injurious; and that it's hard that when the love of souls doth make them unweariedly spend themselves for the peoples good, that this should be one of their unpardonable crimes! How different are mens judgments of *vice* and *virtue*? and they did think also that really before God and man the *Salary* was for the work. And if they had a lawful calling to the work of the place, they thought they had so to the *Salary*. They thought that if a Pilot of a Ship were on pretence of insufficiency and utter ignorance cast out by usurpers of the power, that all Shipping must not therefore stand still, nor all men be proclaimed sinners that take the place and maintenance. I justify not their reasons; but I may tell you my opinion, that being young men (mostly) in the Universities, that had little or nothing of their own, they could not well otherwise have got bread and clothing, much less Books, Fire, House-room, &c. nor long have Preached without bread and clothing. And I knew few of them that when they were cast out, were able to refund or restore that which bought them bread and fire,

fire, and clothing ; unless you would sell them as slaves to work it out.

And to speak truth, many of them thought it a good work, yea very good, to cast out those (how many such there were I meddle not now), that were utterly unable for the work of that office, or grossly (and long-uncurable) vicious.

But I am called by *Mr. Durel* to speak for my self.

And, 1. *Mr. Durel* did you ever know either *me* or the *man* you speak of that was cast out, or ever hear or see the articles against him? If not, syc man, what doing is this for a *French* Divine of so much learning, and a Preacher of the Word of Truth!

But because you talk to the world of things that you never knew, let your patience bear while I trouble you and the Readers with the story which you extort.

When the Long Parliament sate 1640, and shewed a forwardness to reform the Clergy, the people of all Countrys fled to them with Petitions, that thought they greatly needed better Pastors; and too many in dislike of Altars, and Rails, and Lords-day dancing, which they judged hardly of. And among others many people of *Kidderminster* drew up Articles against their Vicar, under three general Heads, *Insufficiency*, and *Negligence*, *Scandal* and *Innovation*. (True or false I am not now telling you), With these their Agents go to *London*, and the Vicar after them, where seeing how matters went, he got the people by the mediation of Sir *Henry Herbert* to yield to this agreement, *That they should chuse a Lecturer to preach to them, and leave the Vicar in his place and Vicaridge to read Common-prayer, (not forbidding him to preach when he would, so he hindered not the Lecturer.)* For which he bound himself in a Bond of 500*l.* to pay the said Lecturer *Threescore pounds a year*. After this agreement, the Bayliff and Impropiator, and others of the people, sent to me to *Bridgnorth* where I lived, to invite me to accept *this Lecture*. At last I came and Preached there twice every Lords-day, and a Thursday-Lecture every fort night, besides Funeral-Sermons, &c. for about a year and half; in all which time I never heard or knew that the Vicar Preached above twice, (though indeed before and since he Preached once a Quarter, or at least once in half a year; (I am not now concern'd to tell you how.) Being driven away at the end of a year and half by the Wars, I came again by the peoples importunity, when the War was ended, (about four years after.) For all that time I never
asked

asked the Vicar for a farthing according to his Bond, though I was forced away. But before I came back to them (without any concurrence of mine) they had again Articled against the Vicar as before, (*That he was utterly insufficient; that when he did preach once a Quarter, his own Wife (though fully conformable) would not hear him; and a great deal of such stuff; to which certain Witnesses, (well accounted of for veracity by the people) took their Oaths: Whereupon the Vicar was sequestred by the Committee, and the Vicaridge put into the hand of several of the neighbours to receive the profits, and pay it to one to officiate the cure. After this the people importune me to take it: I absolutely denied it. They followed me at Coventry, and elsewhere, with importunity; and I still refused it. Only I told them that by an augmentation which I procured, making my 60*l.* a hundred, and a House, I would come to be only their Lecturer as before. When they could not move me, they consented. And lest any misinterpretation should be after made of it, (or any *Mr. Durel* have a pretence of accusation), I got all the Magistrates and chief of the whole Town together, and in the Town-Hall openly, they subscribed an agreement with me to pay me 100*l.* per Ann. as their Lecturer, and that no part of this should accrue from the Vicaridge. Which writing I think I have yet to shew. After this they chose an Assistant to do the rest of the work, and the Sequestrators gathered the Tythes, and never gave any account to me of it, nor had I any title to them; till at last some one put it into the peoples heads that some other would get in and take the place: Whereupon to keep out others they went privately and got the Committee to give them an Order to put me in the sequestred Vicaridge, which they kept privately to themselves for their own Indemnity. And I never once saw it, till just the day that the Kings Majesty now reigning went into Worcester, and the Town was full of Soldiers of both sides; one of them came and brought me the Order, and intreated me to keep it as my own. I told him I would not take it, nor keep it as my own, but they might leave it in the house for safety for their indemnity. And these men thus used my name only for their security; And when I knew it, and asked them whether any of the money they gave me came out of the Tythes, they told me that the 60, which was my due by bond before, and an Augmentation granted by the Parliament to a Chappel, was more than I had. And they used my name in letting their Tythes; which when I knew what they had done,*

I con-

I consented to for their Indemnity. And this was my taking the Sequestration.

And as for the *riches of it*, and the *reward of my military service*, the *last* is a putid fallhood : and the case of the *former* is this : I was offered in my native Country a Parsonage accounted worth 500 *l.* per *Ann.* and my choice of others not much worse. I never had any thought of taking them, but of returning to my former work. The Agreement was made by the Vicar himself ; and the Articles against him first that moved him to it, could not be for his fidelity about the War ; for they were long before the King and Parliament disagreed, and a year and half before the Wars. When I returned, instead of the 500 *l.* which they agreed to pay me and an house, I had usually but 90 *l.* and sometimes 80 *l.* and a few rooms in the top of another mans house. And I never asked them for more. The Vicaridge they told me they used to let at *Sevenscore* or *Eightscore* pound almost, (now worth more) ; of this my Assistant was to have threescore or more, but seldom had near so much ; 6 *l.* per *Ann.* went to the King and chief Lord. (as they then spake.) The Fifths the Vicar had ; and they told me they gave him more, about 40 *l.* per *Ann.* 10 *l.* a year an old conformable Curate at a Chappel had ; and Taxes, and the poor, &c. had something. This 80 or 90 *l.* which I had, was far from defraying my necessary charges. I kept no family but one servant. I spent as little on my self as most men of my calling. When I had kept usually one boy or more at the University, and paid for Bibles, and other Books, and teaching some poor peoples children to read, with other necessary helps to the poor, and particularly my poor Relations, my Stipend was spent before my charges were defrayed. And for the *Vicaridge-house* (which was large and private) I know not what is within the doors. From the first day of its Sequestration till my coming away, which was about fourteen years, I never set my foot within the doors, much less disturbed the Vicar in his possession, even when *Cromwell* published a Declaration for the removal of all sequestred Ministers from the Parsonage or Vicaridge-houses, and two miles from the place ; but I contented my self with the rooms aforesaid. And so much for Mr. *Dwells* better information against the time of his next invective against a stranger, and of a case unknown.

But he further signifieth to the world how hardly I parted with it at the last.

And such usage is very useful to believers, that they may know what to expect, even from some great Pastors of the Church in this present evil world. Therefore Reader, seeing such men will have it so, if I weary thee with one more of my own stories, forgive it as a necessary trouble. The truth is this.

When General *Monk* came up to *London*, I came away from the place I was at before the Sequestration revolved to the Vicar: When the King was restored, and his Declaration about Ecclesiastical Affairs was published, the Lord Chancellor moved me to accept a Bishoprick (of which more anon); which when I refused, (in a manner not displeasing to him), I told him that if he had any kindness for me, I should accept of my continuance with my ancient flock; as a satisfying expression of it, sobeit he would give the old Vicar a better place, that is, some *Prebendship* which required no Preaching, or some *sine Cura*, (for I durst motion him to no other.) To which my Lord Chancellor expressed readiness and resolution. Sir *Ralph Clare* was used by him (who liveth in the place) to treat about it with the Vicar; but it was so ordered that the Vicar refused unless he had another place: no place could be found. My Lord Chancellor would not put such a man (pardon his censure), into a Prebendship, lest it should dishonour the Church. I told him that in a Pastoral Cure it would be much worse. At last my L. Chancellor wrote a Letter with his own hand to Sir *Ralph Clare*, expostulating with him that it was not done, and telling him that it was his Majesties Desire; and speaking more of my desert and his Majesties favour than I will recite; and promising that his own Steward should pay yearly to the Vicar the full value of the Vicaridge if he would resign it to me. And he gave me the Letter unsealed, and I took a copy of it. But the Vicar was not to take this for security. At length that I might satisfy my conscience and people to the utmost that I did not forsake them, I moved the Lord Chancellor that I might be but the old Vicars Curate, and preach under him as such, for any thing or nothing. And at last this also was refused, and Sir *Ralph Clare* plainly told me, that I was the fittest man in *England* for the place if I would conform, and the unfittest of all others if I would not, because of my interest in the people. (And at the parting I thank him, he sent me a purse of money, which I returned him as it came.) And so long a time was spent in attendance of my Lord Chancellor before this business came to an end, that I suppose it is all the occasion of

Mr. Durels conclusion, how hardly I let go a good Benefice so ill gotten. So that Reader, to accept of a poor Curatorship for nothing, under an old Reading Vicar, when I might have had a Bishoprick easily at the same time; and to be denied even that after all these expectations and attendance, is a heinous crime in a poor silenced Minister of Christ in our age, and worthy to be published to the world; and left on record to posterity as a brand of a mercenary man, by one that hath at least more Promotions than one. And thus goeth the History of this age.

And for *Restitution*, the Vicar himself is so well satisfied of my dealing with him, that he gave the Sequestrators or Trustees, (who indeed did meddle with his Tythes (and I verily believe more to their loss than gain) a full discharge of all matters that he could call his due to that day, And my Lectureship, which he was by his Bond to allow me in without impediment, and to pay me 60 *l.* per Ann. I never once claimed, (though I thought by forbidding me to Preach, he had forfeited his Bond) which was to others, not to me.)

And now if their own Rule hold, *ex uno disce omnes*, you see how the Ministers of *England* are to be judged of.

7 Qbj. You think we should grant you leave to Preach; but what leave did you give us when you were in power? Then such requests could not be heard.

Ans. Whom do you speak this of? Of all the silenced Ministers, or some? of most, or few?

1. We were never at all in any other power, than to Preach the Gospel, and administer the Sacraments to the people of one Parish, and to guide them by Gods Word. For my own part, it hath in all changes been my lot to be among them of the displeasing or the afflicted side. What the Parliament would have done, if Cromwell had not garbelled them, I know not. But when the Presbyterians seemed uppermost, I was looked on as a *dissenter*. When that which they call the *Rump* was uppermost, I was *de jure* by their Order sequestred, though not *de facto*, and greatly under their displeasure. And with the Army I was out much more. Cromwell was not for me, because I was not for him. When was it then

that we were in Power? A power of *Ordination* no Minister in the County that ever I heard of, claimed or used. None of us did *Impose our hands in an Ordination*. When the *Commissioners* for trying Ministers cast upon me some of their work, I disclaimed it, till the angry importunity of many *Episcopal* Divines, that were referred to my Examination, and would else have lost their augmentations or places, prevailed with me to keep them in. A great part of the *Episcopal* Ministers in our Country (and in all that I knew) were never removed. And those that were, might have had other places; and I knew not that any were by any of *Cromwell's* Orders forbidden to Preach or use the Common-Prayer in private houses, till towards the later part of his Usurpation; which yet I never knew any execute within the reach of my (then) acquaintance. For my own part, by the approbation aforesaid, and Certificates, I kept many in their Benefices, (even the Vicars own Curate that in 1640 was cast out before I was called to the place.) And I published in Print in my own name and my Brethrens, our detestation of the casting out of any competent worthy Minister for his judgment for *Episcopacy* and Conformity, much more for being in arms against the Parliament, or Preaching against them. And I published it as our earnest request, that all men that were utterly ignorant, Heretical and scandalous, or of vicious debauched lives, might be cast out, without respect to other opinions, or Civil causes; and that all the rest might unite their labours, and be encouraged. This is yet in Print. And I met with few of my acquaintance in the Ministry that were not of the same mind.

And I had some more trial as to practise, when *Cromwell* forbade (as even now I said) the sequestred Ministers to live within two miles of their old Benefice, and commanded them to quit the houses, our Vicar was never disturbed, nor I never came within the house. I never forbade him to preach.

And at a Chappel we had another conformable Minister that read Common-prayer, and said somewhat like a Sermon often, one Mr. *Turner*, infamous for ignorance, drunkenness, railing, and living by unlawful marryings, and making his Ministry a scorn. This Curate I connived at many a year, till his death. I provided a Preacher at first once a day, and afterwards twice, to be resident on the place. I allowed Mr. *Turner* his Stipend, but intreated him not to meddle with the Ministry. For besides his vicious life, I examined him, and could not perceive that he understood scarce

any Article of the Faith; nor had the fortieth part of the knowledge or ability of many of the Wevers, or some of the Plowmen of the Parish, *Musculus* his Common-places *Englisht* was all the Books that I could perceive he had, and that he Preached out of. But he would continue to read Common-prayer, and did, though he might have had his Stipend as much without it. Judg by this whether we were over-forward to silence the Sons of the Church, or cast them out.

3. But what reason or conscience is it, that if you can say *Cromwell*, or the Parliament, or Rump cast out such Ministers, that therefore *we* that had no hand in it, must be silenced? Or if you can name forty Ministers in *England* (as I cannot) that consented unto this, that therefore eighteen hundred that never consented should be forbidden to Preach? Yea, those that declared themselves to be against it?

4. And you know that even the Usurpers allowed the Wives of the sequestred Ministers the fifth part. For my part I never asked you so much.

5. And either the unjust silencing of Ministers by the Usurpers, was *well done*, or *ill done*? If *ill done*, it should be your warning to take heed of sinning as they did; for sure their practices seem not so right and lovely to you, as to be worthy of imitation. They Beheaded Mr. *Love*, and Imprisoned many *London* Ministers, and others, for the Kings sake; and you think not, sure, that you must therefore do so too?

8 Obj. But we are not to distinguish of Nonconformists, when Conformity is necessary to the order of the Church. If a few honest men suffer among a company of Schismatics, Presbyterians, Independents, Rebels, they must take it patiently, and not blame their Rulers, but themselves that chuse so bad companions. The greater part of you deserve it.

Ans. We are not blaming our Governours, but our selves, not for our Nonconformity, but for serving God no more diligently when we had time. But, 1. can you not distinguish, and yet be just? what not the innocent from the guilty? nor friends from foes? This is not the first confusion and evil that want of distinguishing hath caused in the world.

2. If

2. If *your*, I say, *your Conformity* be more necessary than all our Preaching and Ministry, and will help more souls to Heaven, go on with it, and let it prosper. But be sure that you are not mistaken.

3. Are *Presbyterians* so intollerable a sort of people? Or will the bare opinion, that singular Churches have all Church-power of Christs institution among themselves, while they submit to the Civil Government, prove men otherwise sober, to be unsufferable? You know Dr. *Hammond* and other Episcopal Divines do assert an Independency of Diocesan Churches (which he saith *de facto* in Scripture-times had no Presbyters but one Bishop and his few Deacons.) And you know Dr. *Stillingfleet* (of whose judgment Bishop *Reinolds* and many Conformists have profest themselves to be) maintaineth that no one form of Church-Government is of Divine Right and Institution. And if so, then the *Independents* and *Presbyterians* refuse none that is of Divine Institution.

4. But are you sure that you mistake not, to the injury of the sufferers? I can tell the world and you, that I knew but one *Presbyterian* Minister in all *Worcestershire*; and that one was not of our *Association*; nor any one *Independent* associated with us, (though there were three *worthy Ministers* in the County so esteemed) there was not one of the *Associated Ministry* that was so much as reputed *Presbyterian* or *Independent* (but *Episcopal*, some were, that now conform); much less *Anabaptists*, or of any other Sect; but held the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, and loved a Christian as a Christian, and were for the uniting of all the Churches that are found in the faith, and in the things necessary to Church-Communion, even upon the ancient Primitive terms.

And when I think of the *Association* of *Westmorland*, *Wiltshire*, *Dorsetshire*, and other Countrys, I have reason by their Articles to think they were of the same mind.

And must such abundance be silenced for the opinions of a few, whom they never signified any consent to?

Obj. If you are suffered to Preach, you will but confirm the people in their Nonconformity and dislike of the Government: For though you say nothing of it, they will become a faction for the sake of your opinions: and what confusion will it cause, to have one par-

ty of the Church for one Preacher, and another for another; you, as you would have it, for one to cross the baptized child, and another not; or for one to wear a Surplice, and another a Gown?

Ans. 1. There is nothing in this imperfect life that shall attain perfection; nor can any publick good be done without any inconveniencies. But, O cure not an inconvenience with a mischief! Kill not a fly that sitteth on your brothers forehead, with a Beetle or a Butchers axe. It's strange that wise men can be so partial or narrow-sighted, as to look so intently after their own desires or interests, as to spy out possibilities of inconvenience, and never see the loss of souls, and great calamities that attend the other way.

2. And indeed are you conscious of no frailties in your selves, which are as great an inconvenience to the souls of men, and the successes of the Gospel, and honour of the Church, as different practisings of the Cross or Surplice? Are you humble men, and teachers of humility? Do you know your selves, and teach the people to know themselves? Are you penitent men, and Preachers of Repentance? and yet have never found any thing more injurious to the souls of men, or the ends of your office in all your Preaching, praying and ministrations, than the not using of a Cross or Surplice? Forgive me if I ask you, whether you dare appear before God with no better a Repentance? and what a Pharisee could say more than, *I thank thee, God, that I am not so bad as this Puritan, that will not subscribe, or use the Cross or Surplice?* But I suppose you will confess that you have much worse Ministerial failings, and if so, should you not be impartial, and say, *Veniam petimusq; damusq; vicissim?* I verily thought when I entered into the Ministry, that not one of all my School masters, the tipling Readers before-mentioned, were more useful to the Church than an *Aufesamus*, a *Hildersham*, &c.

3. But I beseech you let not conceit affright you; or at least let not so many pay so dear for your causeless fears: It is in your power more than in ours, to prevent all the feared inconveniences of our Preaching. It is most certain, that needless Impositions are the great cause of factions and divisions in the Church. We heretofore instanced to you:

1. There is no Imposition what gesture to sing a Psalm in, or to hear Gods Word; and about these I never heard of a contention. But about the Sacrament-gesture, and bowing rather at the Name

of:

of JESUS, than of *Christ*, or *God*; there is Imposition, and there's Contention.

2. There is far more difference between your *Cathedral Worship*, and your common *Parish-Worship*, than between the users and not users of a Cross and Surplice: And yet it causeth no such Factions. 1. If you say that it is because they differ not in *Judgment*, but in *Practice*. I answer, 1. That's more than you know. I believe you would have some more Nonconformists, if you everywhere imposed the Cathedral-Worship. And 2. we shall be known to differ in *Judgment*, whether we preach or worship with you or not.

3. And some of you (as *Dr. Heylin*, and the Answerer of a parcel of our Reply to you) are against the use of any prayers in the Pulpit, but the Liturgy; and some against praying there before Sermon, but only for *bidding prayer*, as they call it. And most of you practice otherwise, and yet it maketh no division.

4. Nay, when bowing towards the Altar was recommended in the Canon of 1640, it was not *Imposed*, but men desired not to judg one another about it. And why might not Crossing be under the like liberty?

5. And even in *Doctrinals* (which are more than Ceremonies) you know what a notorious difference there is among your selves? Some called *Arminians*, and preaching for it: some that think, and preach against it: some preach for Original sin, and Bishop *Taylor* writeth against it; and yet you can bear with one another. Yea, how many new Doctrines hath Mr. *Thorndike* published, and yet his Ministry is tollerable?

6. Yea, even about the matters of State, you know what Mr. *Thorndike* hath said against the Oath of Supremacy, as necessary to be altered, for the Papists sake: And yet what Faction hath this caused?

7. Yea, you should consider, that it is one of the greatest policies of *Rome*, for the preservation of their Peace and Unity, and the power of their Hierarchy, that the Pope alloweth such diversities of Religious Houses, Orders, Rules and Ceremonies, that all humors are thereby fitted; and every man that hath a mind of an odd and stricter way, may find a time or society for his turn. And will not the long experience of so great a Church, do something to convince you of your mistake?

4. But what confusion will it be for a man to forbear a Surplice every day, when many of your own forbear it *most* days, and wear it but seldom, and this without confusion? And what if a child be uncrossed, when the Parents so desire it, or done by another when they desire it? What confusion is this? Why may not a little measure of brotherly love serve, to procure mutual patience in that which is no injury to any, as well as in the bowing towards the Altar, where you think it may serve turn] without uniformity?

5. But that which I would chiefly have you mind is, that your own way will cross your ends and interest much more than this which we propose to you. It is long since you told me your thoughts (some of you), that if the Ministers were taken from them, the people would conform, and be reduced: And since I told you, I was assured you were mistaken; and that the casting out of the Ministers, would be a very great increase of the peoples disaffection to you, and consequently of divisions. You have since had seventeen years tryal, whether this be true or not! Alas, that *England* must suffer so much, while the Bishops are learning how to rule, and do their office, yea learning that which weaker persons easily perceive? Alas! that so many thousand Souls must pay so dear, for a few mens experience? I know you say that it is, because the Laws are not strictly executed: But I suppose you know how many Ministers (such as the world is not worthy of) have layen long in the Jayls, in *Devonshire*, in *Somersetshire*, in *Dorsetshire*, in *Worcestershire*, and in many other Counties; and also how many of the Laity have suffered their three months Imprisonment, and some much more: and how little all this hath served your turn; and how much further you would carry on your severity I know not: But I know you are not like to cause either *Love or Unanimity* by this way. Will no experience teach you such easie and obvious things? Do you not see, that there are many more of the common people disaffected to your Ministry and way, than were when the Ministers were first silenced and cast out? Yea, they that lost no Ministers of their own, are yet changed by the common experience of the Land. You will not endure us to tell you truly, what a Ministry you have cast out, and what a Ministry in too many places are in their stead. But the people will know it, whether you will or not. To tell men beyond Sea in *Latin*, as Mr. Durel doth, of our badness, and of the excellency

of your present Ministry, will not persuade the people of *England*, not to believe their ears and eyes. I love to instance where I dwell and see, because of certainty. This Market-Town of *Barnet*, ten miles from *London*, was so extremely addicted to your way, and so impatient of the Directory and the Ministry now cast out, that one who was their Minister in the times of Usurpation, told me he was fain to leave them; and professed to me, that he was really afraid, lest they would have put him into the Grave, and buried him alive, for burying a Corps without the Common prayer, according to the Directory. And now the case is so much altered, that (though the Town consist so much of Inns and Ale-houses, which are very seldom Nonconformists) a private Meeting, near the Church, is crowded like as the Churches were, and the Church is almost empty.

6. And I will make hold to tell you, that if you should banish or imprison all the Ministers, and if you should force the people to forbear to conform to you, as forced Conformity against their wills is but hypocrisie, and doth but paint your Churches with the Ornament of mens company, and profiteth not their Souls; so you do thereby but prepare instruments to undermine your selves. For forced unwilling Conformists will turn against you, as soon as they have opportunity: And if you imprison men in your Churches, they will be still seeking to get out. Were not almost all the *Westminster*-Assembly Episcopal conformable men, when they came thither? And did not almost all the people of the Land Conform before the Wars? And yet you know that they did you never the more service, nor the less displeasure.

I must profess it was my unhappiness to have so bad acquaintance, that before the unhappy Wars, I knew not one Conformable Divine, to my best remembrance, who was of a Religious blameless life, and seemed seriously to believe, and seek the life to come, and to prefer Heaven before Earth, who did not Conform only upon Mr. *Spring*'s argument of Necessity, and had not rather have been excused; and would not profess, that they had far rather that this Conformity were not imposed; and that they did it (as *Paul* submitted to some Jewish Ceremonies) meerly that they might not be kept from Preaching; And so they held Conformity to be lawful: And therefore with the Assembly, when they might be free, they chose it rather. And is this the happiest Unity that you might attain?

10 Obj. *Your pretended Piety is but Pharisaical hypocrisie: you are the successors of the Pharisees, whom Christ spoke harder of, than of Publicans and Harlots: And the vicious and debauched are more tolerable than you, whose Religions and zealous Villanies are of greater danger to the publick safety; and whose Piety is but pride, in counting your selves Holier, and better than your Neighbours, and saying, I thank thee, God, that I am not as other men, nor as this Publican.*

Ans. 1. It is a shrewd suspicion that their Cause is not good, who are put to uphold it by accusing their adversaries of *heart-sins*, as *Hypocrisie* is, which are quite out of the sight of men. Either you mean that it is *Hypocrisie latent*, or *Hypocrisie detected* by a wicked life. If the former, I confess you have us at an advantage; For as you pretend to be as Gods in knowing the heart; so we who confess our selves but men, have no way of defence against heart-accusations, but *denial*, and calling for your proof: And our *Denial* were not enough, if you knew the *heart* indeed. Our judgment is, that *Hypocrisie* is a most hateful sin; and (as I have declared my opinion at large, in a Discourse called *The Formal Hypocrite*) we think that all men (except the professed *Atheists* and *Infidels*, who have multiplied since the Ministers were silenced) among us in *England*, are either *Saints* or *Hypocrites*; For all that profess true Christianity, according to their Baptismal-Covenant, do profess *Sanctity*: And therefore we suppose, that the more any mans life is contrary to his profession, the more notorious Hypocrite he is. For the difference lyeth not in the Materials of our Profession: For we profess nothing as our Religion, but *Christianity*: If any go further, we renounce their profession. And all of you that stand to your Baptism, profess Christianity, the same Christianity as we. The question therefore is, Whose lives do most contradict their profession? I doubt not but you will confess (for you cannot deny it), that a proud, domineering, worldly, covetous, drunken, gluttonous, malicious, persecuting Christian, is an Hypocrite. If you prove any among us guilty of these, you were best name the men, unless you think that Non-conformity to Oaths and Subscriptions, make all that are endued with it, eat and drink too much. As for these other *zealous Villanies*

Villanies which you charge upon us, they are to be spoken of by themselves. We are content, that if the Nonconformists live do contradict their Christian profession more than the Conformists (proportionably) that you write in Capital Letters, the name [*Hypocrite*] upon every ones back and breast, that the people may know them as they go along the streets; and may gratifie the Politician, by *hating them more for their hypocrisie, than they admired them for their pretended Saintship.*

But, if you will hear a person whom you so much dislike, I will tell you how this may be best discovered. Do not perswade our Rulers any more to make Laws to eject men for not taking those *Oaths, Subscriptions, &c.* for then men will think (whether you will or not) that you had no greater fault to prove them Hypocrites by: But get them to make a Law, that all Rebels, Traytors, swearers, drunkards, fornicators, gluttons, covetous persons, pluralists, non-residents, soul-murdering idle Teachers shall be cast out, whether they subscribe and declare, or not: And then those that are flagitious will be the sufferers; and if it fall upon the present Nonconformists, let them bear it, and spare not. Again we intreat you to get us such Laws against all Vice, except those that are made vice: by the wills and interests of differing Factions, and execute them as severely as you will. And then if we be proved criminal, name the *Vices* which you think proveth men Hypocrites, and it will sound better to accuse them of these, than of hypocrisie; or at least to prove their hypocrisie by those, than by presumptions, and general unproved accusations. Let him have his portion with Hypocrites; who by living most contrary to the Christian profession, doth most convincingly prove himself an Hypocrite.

I confess, since I have still observed from my youth, that the most vicious enemies of godliness have used to call those Hypocrites, who do but seem to be no Hypocrites, that is, to be serious in the Christian profession, and seriously to mind, and mention, and seek the life to come; I have been constrained when I heard a man called an Hypocrite, and no more (especially by a vicious man, or an adversary), to suspect that there is some more than ordinary excellency in that person: For I must suppose it is some great *good* which he is thought to make a cloak for evil: If *long praying* had not been *good*, it had not been a fit pretence for oppression in the Pharisees. If, *praying* and *alms-deeds* had not been

been good; it would have disgraced the Hypocrites, *Matth. 6.* to have made ostentation of them. When you call us Hypocrites, and dissembled *Saints*, you tell the world, that we have the *profession*, and outward *appearance* of good: And whether we corrupt it by a *deceitful heart*, remaineth to be *proved*, as well as *asserted*. Mr. Robert Bolton was no Nonconformist (as to the old Conformity) who noteth it to be the use of the world, to charge the soundest Christians with Hypocrisie, because then they talk of the secrets of the heart, which we cannot open for our own vindication.

2. As for *self-estimation*, our *judgment* is, that *Pride* is one of the worst of sins, and *Pride of Wisdom* and *Godliness* is one of the worst sorts of *Pride*: and there are too many guilty of it in the world, and we would fain have leave to Preach against it: In the mean time we spare not by Writing and Conference, and such Preaching as we use, to do against it what we can. And we shall heartily thank you for any true help, to detest and mortifie it more in our selves. But remembring from my childhood, that the fots and drunkards of the Town and Countrey, where I lived, were used to speak the very same words with this Objection, against all serious godly Christians, how conformable soever; I presume to ask you these few Questions.

Q. 1. Are the Conformists more *Godly* or *Holy*, than all the ignorant, drunken, unchast, voluptuous, carnal rabble, or are they not? Q. 2. If not, why do they take it for a wrong to hear of much less? If they are (as I doubt not but very many are), do they so *esteem* themselves, or not? If not, why should they be angry with others for thinking of them, as they think of themselves? If yea, Q. 3. May they not take it for a greater mercy than all the riches of the World? If all are none of Christs, that have not his spirit, may not they give God thanks for it that have received it? *Rom. 8. 9.* Q. 4. And do you never give God thanks for his grace of Sanctification your selves? Q. 5. If you do, how shall a man know that you are not as very Hypocrites in so doing, as the Nonconformists? When they and you thank God for the same mercy, how shall we know but by the fruits, which of you is sincere? Q. 6. Do you know that there are any, or many among us, that live after the flesh, an ungodly, sensual, worldly life? If not, you are strangers to the Land which you inhabit? If yea, Q. 7. Do you think all these are in a good
and

and safe condition? If yea, give over Preaching against them; If not, do not better men differ from them? *Q. 8.* And must not our light so shine before men (though not for their applause), that they may see our good works, and glorifie God? *Mark. 5. 16.*

4. And seeing we are accounted the Pharisees, Come on, and let us recite the Pharisees Character, and see who is likest him?

1. The Pharisees were the chiefest members of the *Sanhedrim*, and Rulers of the Church, and so are not we, *Act. 5. 34. Mat. 12. 14. & 23. 2. & 27. 62. John 7. 32 48.*

2. The Pharisees were against the Scripture-sufficiency, for the *customs* and *traditions* of their ancestors, *Mat. 15. 2.*

3. They imposed these Traditions as Laws on others, and accused the Christians for not observing them, *Mat. 15. 2.*

4. They preferred these Tradition before the practice of some Moral duties, *Mat. 15. 9. 5. 6.*

5. They were so much for Ceremony, that they were precise and strict in the observance of their Ceremonies, *Mat. 23. 5. 23. 25, &c.* and for them neglected mercy and faith, *Mat. 23. 23.*

6. They were covetous, and sought after Riches, even by oppression, *Mat. 23. 14.*

7. They were proud and Lordly, and strove for preferment, the highest places, and the highest titles, *Mat. 23. 6, 7, &c.*

8. They wore a different sort of garments, which was openly to signifie their special holiness, *Mat. 23. 5.*

9. They were very zealous to make men Profelytes, and conformable to all their Ceremonies, *Mat. 23. 15.*

10. They foolishly and preposterously preferred small matters before great, *v. 16, 17, &c.*

11. They laboured to silence Christ and the Preachers of his Gospel, and forbade them with threatnings to Preach any more, *Mat. 23. 13. Act. 4. 18, &c.*

12. They persecuted Christ and his Apostles, and sought first to intrap them in their speech, and then to bring them into sufferings, *Luke 6. 7, &c.* If you know any that ever silenced or persecuted any faithful Minister, he is none of the men that I am speaking for.

13. They pretended Law for all their cruelties, *John 15. 7.* and accused them as breakers of the Law, *Luke 6. 2. & 43.*

14. They urged Christ to decide State-Controversies about *Cæsars* right, which he warily avoided, knowing they did but seek matter of accusation, *Mat. 22. 17. Mark 12. 14.*

15. Yet did they accuse him as an enemy to *Cæsar*, and as guilty of disloyalty, even to his crucifixion, *Luke 23. 2. John 10. 12.* And were not contented to take away his life, unless they put on him the infamy of Treason.

16. They would not understand the meaning of the Law of Love, or *I will have mercy, and not sacrifice*, *Mat. 9. 13.*

17. They were stricter for Tything, and such Levitical Rights, than for the spiritual worshipping of God, *Mat. 23. 23.*

18. Their Righteousness was more in outside Religious pomp and bodily exercise, than in the inward part, and moral practise, *Mat. 23. 24, &c.*

19. They pretended great veneration for the dead Saints, and built them Monuments for an honourable memorial, while they imitated those that murdered them, and persecuted the living Saints that imitated them, *Mat. 23. 26, 27, &c.*

20. They had their set-days of formal fasting twice a week, turning even extraordinary duties and all, into form and ceremony, *Luke 18. 2.* And were inquisitive after them that conformed not herein, *Mat. 9. 14. Mark 2. 18.*

21. They counted it the folly and ignorance of the Law, in the common people, whom they took for cursed, to be such admirers of the preaching of Christ, *John 7. 49.*

22. They used long prayers, as a cloak for their oppression. *Query*, Whether they were a Liturgy or not? If yea, so let it pass in their Character. If not, then it is scarce like that there was any other Liturgy than the Scriptures in those times: else it is most like that the Pharisees would have used it.

For, 23. they *went* up into the Temple to pray, and sometime in other publick places (as Bishop *Hall* notably describeth the Hypocrite in his Characters, that he kneeling down behind a Pillar in the great Church, muttereth over certain words, praying to that God whom he all the week at home forgetteth and disobeyeth; and rising up, commendeth the devotion of our ancestors: He boweth at the name of Jesus, and sweareth by the name of God, &c. (This is the sense, for being separated from books I pretend not to recite *verbatim*): So did these Pharisees make ostentation of their prayers in the Temple; but we read not of
their

their family or secret prayers, which Christ enjoineeth to his Disciples, that they may differ from the Pharisees, *Mat. 6.*

24. They insulted over the followers of Christ as an accursed ignorant vulgar sort, when they were blind themselves, and knew not the Spirituality of Doctrine or Worship, *Mat. 23. 26.*

25. They were loose Expositors of the Law of God, and extended it not to those Internals, and necessary strictness which was the proper sense, but made it forbid no more than those notable external evils which themselves and their vulgar followers could spare, *Mat. 5.*

26. And with the forbearance of these outward sins, and the performance of their Ceremonies, they so contented themselves, and quieted their Consciences, that they wanted the true and spiritual Righteousness, absolutely necessary to Salvation, *Mat. 5. 20.*

27. They were the very leaders of all the malignant party that hated Christ and his Disciples, and more zealous against them than the very Heathen *Roman* Governours, who sometime saved the Preachers from the Pharisees rage.

28. They were so malignant that they envied the very good works, and healing miracles which Christ did, and repined and fretted that God should so much honour Christians, *Joh. 11. 47.*

29. They were so malignant that no course of the Servants of God could please them, or escape their obloquy. But *John* that lived austerely, they reproached as a melancholy Demoniack, or a crackt-brain'd man; and Christ that used a freer converse, they accused as not strict enough for them.

30. They were so malignant that they could not endure to have God acknowledged the owner and approver of Christianity, but would rather have the people take Christ for a deceiver, or his works to be done by the Devil himself, than that God should be known to be the author of them, as his attestation and seal to the Truth of Christ, *Mat. 12. 24.*

31. Being a Generation that never had done complaining of those that conformed not to their Ceremonies and outside Rites, and yet void of true Sanctification, Christ pronounced them a Plant that his Father had not planted, that were e're long to be extirpated, *Mat. 15. 13. 12. 2. & 12. 2. 14.*

32. They formally preached much good, as sitting in *Moses* Chair, and having a holy Law to speak of, but their own lives were covetous, proud, persecuting, and contrary to the Law, and

to their own Doctrine ; and yet their very Doctrine had much corruption, *Mat.* 16. 1, 6, 11. & 21. 45. & 23. 2. *Luk* 16. 14.

33. Yet were these Pharisees of a much sounder judgment than the Atheistical Sadduces, and therefore thought highly of themselves ; and some few among them had a secret favour unto Christ, as far as their reputation and the fear of their party would permit, *Luk* 7. 36. *Joh* 3. 1, 2. *Act* 5. 34. & 23. 6, 7, 8, 9.

In all this I have but recited the Scripture Characters of the Pharisees, not daring to speak a word of the application ; for I much doubt whether you will not think that I have drawn your picture, by the bare recitation of the Text ; so much did I wonder at one of the last Sermons which I heard in publick (but just such as I have oft heard forty-five years ago) which was spent in likening the Puritan to the Pharisee ; how the speaker avoided blushing, and remembering what the hearers would think when they should read the History of the Pharisees in the Bible ; and whether they perceived what injury they did themselves, who used to call the people to such observations. For my part I would counsel them never to name the Pharisees more, lest the hearers apply it otherwise than they imagin. At least never more to go about to make men think that the Puritan (who is so contrary to him) is like the Pharisee ; for men never speed worse than by such monstrous undertakings. But yet it may be some of them believe themselves. For he that will needs make his own Creed, may make his own Faith ; but if they make as large Creeds for others, and call them to subscribe them, and to swear to them, when they cannot make them a Faith proportionable, they will but multiply Nonconformists. And so much to your angry censure, which leaveth us room for no more argumentative a defence.

11 Obj. If you do scruple Conformity, why do you gather private meetings, and separate from the Church, and hold your meetings at the time of our publick Worship ? and encourage the people in their Separations ? For whatever you say of your self, you cannot but know that it is so in London, and in many other places ?

O

Ans.

Ans. 1. I told you not my own practise alone, but many others; and when I have told you our Principles, you will the better know how to judg of our different practises.

The Nonconformists hold, 1. That we are members of the Catholick Church, in order of nature, before we are of any particular Church. For Baptism, as such, doth enter us into the former. And that no man must ever separate from this Church upon any pretence whatsoever.

2. That our Communion with this Catholick Church is our concord in the performance of that Baptismal Covenant which uniteth us.

3. That our conjunction with this or that particular Church, is a matter left to humane prudence, and to be changed according to the interest of our own souls, and the publick good; and that God bindeth me not to one Church more than to another, by any Law, except that general Law which directeth us what choice to make of matters undetermined.

4. That the Magistrate is the Governour of these Churches as to their external ordering, which supposeth the Pastors to be Governours governed by him; (as Schoolmasters, Philosophers, Pilon, Architects, &c.) and that the Pastors are essential to the Church, (in a Political sense, as we now take it) as a Schoolmaster is to a School; but so is not the Magistrate.

5. That the ordinary instituted way of the Pastors call to a particular Church, is by the Direction of the Ordaining Pastors, and by the Election or Consent of the Congregation. And that as the Churches had true Pastors without and against the Magistrates consent, so may it have still; seeing then and now the Magistrate had Power of Governing Churches already made, by exterior order, rather than of making or unmaking Churches. And therefore that a Pastor may still be a true Pastor, when he is prohibited to Preach.

6. That the Magistrate hath the power of things *circa sacra*, that is, of Temples, Tythes, maintenance, &c. so that he divideth not the Pastor of his intrinseck power, proper to his office, (as to chuse his subject, method, words, &c.) And therefore that no Minister may seize upon the said Temples, Tythes, &c. against the Magistrates will.

7. That *ubi Episcopus, ibi Ecclesia*, as Cyprian saith, where the true Pastor is, there is the Church, because the Pastor is an Essential

tial, and the *Governing part*. And as this was true in *Cyprian's* time, so it is now.

8. That if Usurping Pastors, though by the Magistrates consent, do take possession of the *Temples* and *publick maintenance*, (and *Legal Right* as well as *possession*) this is not enough to make those men true *Pastors over that people*, without *their consent*, and to nullifie the relation of their *former lawful Pastors*.

9. That it is not impossible or rare for the Usurper to have the foresaid advantages, and the true Pastors to be put to meet in private places; and so thought *Dr. Wild*, *Dr. Gunning*, *Dr. Hide*, &c. in the time of our Civil Usurpations. And even under lawful Governours it was so judged by the Churches in the case of *Athanasius*, *Easil*, and multitudes of Bishops then cast out.

10. That abundance of the Ministers now cast out, were once the lawful Pastors of the flocks.

11. That when the true Pastor is thrust out of the Temples, and Usurpers have that place, he is rather the *Separatist* that followeth the Usurper in that more publick place, than he that adhereth in private to the lawful Pastor; as *Dr. Wild* and the rest aforementioned then thought.

12. That therefore in those places where the Relation of prohibited Ministers to the people is truly dissolved, they are the faulty dividers that adhere to them. But where it is not dissolved, but the publick Teachers were never their true Pastors, there those may be the Schismatics that forsake their lawful Pastors, though under that restraint.

13. That where the Pastors that have the Temples, and those that are shut out, are both true Pastors, *ceteris paribus*, it is as good a proof that they are Separatists and Schismatics who join not with them in other places, as that they are so for not coming to the Temples; that is, neither of the inferences is good.

14. Every man is not a Separatist, that is not present with others in publick worship. I separate not from all foreign Churches, nor from all the Parish Churches in *London* save one, though I be present but with one. But he that censurcth a *true Church* to be no Church, and so separateth from it as *none*; and he that accounteth any Church injuriously, to be so corrupted as that it is unlawful to hold communion with it, both these are guilty of culpable Schismatical separation, but in very different degrees.

15. A mans absence from you will not alone prove him a Separatist, unless he be absent upon separating Principles.

16. He that keepeth not local communion with a particular Church, and yet honoureth them as a Church that may be communicated with, and holdeth communion of *Faith and Love*, and *Obedience* with them, cannot be a Separatist from them *simply*, but only extrinsically *secundum quid* ; and that is to be tried and judged of as aforesaid.

17. If therefore they will admit you to communicate with them in their way, and will not communicate with you in *your way* ; it sheweth that it is something in *your way* and not directly in your selves, from which they separate.

18. And no man ought to commit one sin for the communion of any Church.

19. I may have more mental communion with a Church, which I dare not outwardly join with, because they impose some one unlawful word or action, than with a more corrupted Church, with which I hold more external communion, because they put me not to approve their errors.

20. When there are several Churches near, *ceteris paribus*, a free man should join himself with the Purest, and to the most edifying Ministry ordinarily.

21. Yet in times of suspicion and division, it is fit to shew our judgment by our practise, and to join sometimes with some less pure Churches, that put no sin upon us to shew that we withdraw not from them on separating principles.

22. When a Minister is not lawfully separated from his flock, but another is obtruded without a just call upon his people, yet if he see that the voluntary relinquishing of his relation, is most for the peoples good, that they may accept another that hath more secular advantages to profit them, and guide them in peace, he is *finis gratia* in prudence bound to do it.

23. All people in *England* therefore are not in the same condition, but to some it may be a fault which to others is a duty. Were I in a place where the Minister is faithful and worthy to be owned, I would draw all the people to attend his Ministry, and would help him at other seasons as I were able, in unity and love. But if I lived where the publick Minister were intollerable, I would do otherwise.

24. The case of *London* much differeth from most other places in the Land; as very many of them think that their relation to their ancient flocks is not yet dissolved; so necessity putteth them out of the track of formal Parish-order.

1. In the great Plague almost all the Parish-ministers deserted them; and those that then stuck to the people, found such success by the help of that awakening judgment, that they durst not since forsake them, nor will easily be forsaken by them.

2. There being so many score Churches burnt down, and the Inhabitants not gone, and the conformable Ministers not officiating but in the standing Temples, there is no reason that the people should therefore turn Atheists, and give over worshipping God.

3. Many Parishes being so great, that the twentieth person cannot come to the Temples, and many of the Preachers voices so low that half cannot hear them who might get in, there is no reason that all the rest must therefore be cast off and left as the *Indians*, without the means that God hath appointed for mens Salvation.

4. And why then should not their Assemblies take the fittest time of the day as well as yours? All men know that (especially in the short Winter-days) there is little convenient time left for the work of a Lords-day, besides the time of your morning and evenings Liturgy, and other Offices.

5. And when you have as many as can hear you, O why should you be angry that the rest (or rather some few of them) are hearing others, that Preach as profitably as you? Nay I beseech you before God judg, try and judg what is the cause that when many parts perhaps of your absent Parishioners are at no Church, but some in Ale-houses, Taverns, or Gaming-houses, and some idle at home, that yet the few that are worshipping God with an able faithful Minister are more exclaimed on, and written against, and angerly accused, than all the rest.

Obj. But many of the Parish-churches are half empty?

Ans. 1. It is not so with the rest; and therefore you may see that the difference between your own Preachers is the cause. Unedifying Teachers will not have so many voluntary intelligent hearers as others.

2 As I said, half the Church-full cannot hear many of your Preachers.

3. When

3. When the Parishioners know beforehand that the Temple will not hold a quarter of the people, they are never certain of room, as not knowing when others will exclude them; and therefore they seek another place where they may be certain. For he that brings his family to Church every day upon such uncertainty, is every day uncertain whether he shall spend the day as the Lords-day, or have any publick communion with the Church. And they are apter to be sensible of this calamity themselves, than the Objectors are.

6. And I must add also, that as *London* is the most populous place, so it hath the greatest number of true Separatists and Sectaries; and the sounder part are not responsible for their actions.

12 Obj. *But with what conscience do you come into Cities, Corporations, or within five miles of them, or of your former Preaching-places? Doth God bid you preach just here? And how do your scriptures engage you thus to break the Laws?*

Ans. Even with such a Conscience as we Preach in *England*, when the Scripture nameth not *England* to us. Did not the ancient Christians also disobey a lawful power, when they settled their Churches in Cities, even when they were forbidden both City and Country? and if Christ say, *When they persecute you in one city, fly to another; and you bid us, fly from all, and fly to none.* Hath not a Nonconformists Conscience something of the command of Christ to countenance his practice? But our true Reasons are the same as are forementioned for our Preaching. If necessity be upon us to Preach because of the peoples necessity to hear, then where their necessity is greatest, there our obligation is greatest. But in populous Cities and Towns, when the ablest conformable Minister is insufficient for a quarter of the Parish, the peoples necessities are greatest. *Ergo,*

If it be lawful for us to desert and betray to Satan the souls of all the Cities and Corporations in *England*, and within five miles of them, and of all the places where we have Preached, why will it not be lawful to do so by the rest? *Where the carcass is, the eagles will be gathered together;* and where the work and Vineyard is, the labourer must be.

And

And all good men love the *publick good*, and therefore will chuse those places for their labour (*ceteris paribus*) which the publick good doth most depend on.

Especially if the people of their ancient charge live there, and they think that their relation to them is not dissolved.

And I must profess, that few of the passages of this generation do more astonish me with dread and wonder, than to think that City-Pastors who have so vast a charge, and so much more need of help than the Country, yea men of reputed learning, sobriety and piety, should ever be desirous to take this burden wholly on themselves, and should be the forwardest to drive away assistants, yea and make it a sin to preach to those souls, that they know they cannot preach to themselves! Yea, that the same men that one year have much ado to satisfie their own consciences to conform, and think they speed well, if with Conformity they can but keep up some reputation of honesty, yet the next year make so great a progress, as to question his honesty, that will not sacrilegiously renounce his Ministry, and are the forwardest to put down all Preaching save their own! Do the *Pastors* themselves no better know the Parish bounds, and the peoples wants, or the worth of souls? What then can we expect from others?

Obj. But it is not your help, but your hindering us that we are against. Do you help us by drawing the people from us to your selves?

Ans. I cannot tell whether we help you or not, till I know what is your help. If your work be not to get followers and applause, but to bring men to Christian knowledge, faith, love, obedience, and patience, then all the Ministers that I plead for are you *helpers*; those that are not, silence them, and spare not. But if your work be to preach up your selves, and your successes be reckoned by your applause, I cannot tell whether we help you or not. For though we seek to increase your reputation with the people, yet it is not as you are *self-seekers*, but as in charity we hope you preach more for Christ, and mens Salvation, than for your selves.

13 Obj. *But what you before denied of the Magistrate, you cannot deny of the Church: The Church calleth you, and giveth you your power: Therefore it may take it from you: And so Mr. Rathband confesseth, and the old Nonconformists practised.*

Ans. 1. The [Church] is an ambiguous word. If you mean the Bishops, all those whom you call to be re-ordained, deny that ever the Bishops gave them their power.

2. And it was One Bishop who ordained each of the rest, or two at most, who are both dead, and cannot take away what they gave.

3. I have answered this before, and more largely in my Dispute of Ordination: Men give us not our Power at all, as from themselves; but as Servants of Christ invest them solemnly to whom he giveth it. And a servant cannot dispossess him whom by his Masters Orders he hath invested.

4. You give us our Baptism and Matrimony, as truly as our Ministry: And yet you cannot take them from us.

5. But indeed, if the Church, that is, the People, refuse us, we cannot reach and edifie them against their wills.

6. And if one Bishop silence us, he doth it but as exercising Government in his Diocese; and it followeth not, that we are silenced in all others.

7. And they that dissent from our Diocesan frame of Prelacy, do not much reverence their Governing Spiritual Power: And if the Kings prohibition bind them not against their Conscience of Gods obligations to be silent, much less will yours.

8. No Bishops have silenced us by Spiritual Government that we know of, but only as Barons by the Secular Laws, to which they gave their Votes (which yet all did not): How then are we obliged by their Power of the Keys to be silent? For my part I have one or two of their Licenses never re-called or nulled.

9. If a Bishop should silence him under pretence of Government and Order, whom God obligeth to preach, as much as I have before proved that we are obliged, it were *ipso facto* null as to our Consciences, as being against the Laws of God.

10. He that is silenced in every Bishops Diocese, is not yet thereby

thereby degraded, but is still a Minister, to the world at least for their conversion; For those without (the Infidels and Heathens) are of no Bishops Diocess; And it's a question, whether those among us that openly renounce the Prelacy, and declare themselves to be none of their Church, are yet indeed members of their Church whether they will or not? We believe not, that a Law of the Land doth make any man a Church-member without his own consent. If you think otherwise, why distinguish you the *Sons of the Church* from others? If all the people of *London* be not the *Sons*, or members of your Church, the rest are not under your *Pastoral Spiritual Government*: And as for your *Secular Power*, enough is said of that before. And I think no man will say that the extent of your Diocess to many hundred Parishes, is a Divine Institution, obliging all mens consciences to obey you, that shall come within that circuit of ground: you will ascribe this extent of your power to the King and Laws; of which more in due place.

And as to the old Nonconformists, they forbore the Temples and publick maintenance, and so do we: And I am sure they used to preach in private, as well as we; yea and in the Churches when they thought it brought no great inconvenience by offence. Mr. *Hildersham*, Mr. *Nichols*, and abundance more, did preach in publick after they were forbidden and silenced, till execution hindered them as well as Law. And Mr. *Nichols*, Mr. *Langley*, Mr. *Bromskill*, and many more, when they were driven from one place, would preach where they found opportunity in another. And Mr. *Herring* was wont privately to preach in *Shrewsbury*, as his most credible friends and hearers told me. And indeed the far greatest part of the Nonconformists, that ever I knew, had publick liberty, in some small peculiar, for most of their time, if not by connivence in greater places: So had Mr. *Knowstubs*, *Ash*, *Slater*, *Root*, *Ball*, *Barnet*, *Gilpin*, and many more.

And yet we as well as Mr. *Raibband* will submit to a suspension, or prohibition of authority, when it is but an act of *Order* and Government of just authority, and not a notorious subversion of the thing Ordered, or the End, and Gods Laws and mens necessities oblige us not to the contrary. The Papists hold that a Father may not keep his Son from taking Orders. If the Bishops were our Fathers then, they could not hinder us from the faithful exercise of what we have undertaken.

14 Obj. *The Reason why you are against Bishops is, because you cannot be Bishops your selves: And why was it that you so long demurred on the matter, before you refused them, when some had such offers? Did it not shew that you had a mind of them?*

Ans. The first half of this charge was given in the Pulpit to my face, when no Minister or Nonconformist else was present: The other is the *Debate-makers* (in sense). And seeing I am personally concerned in the matter, my answer must be historical accordingly.

Will not all sober by-standers think that we have very hard measure, and have to do with a strange generation? When they shall know that Bishopricks were offered us without seeking directly or indirectly, and refused with as much modesty as we could use; and after all are denied not only the place of the poorest Curates, but even all liberty to Preach for nothing, to the rudest, poorest Inhabitants of the Land; and yet after all this, to be told that we are against Bishops, because we could not be Bishops our selves? O happy Christians, that must be finally judged by a more righteous Judge!

If you say that you mean it of those that never had such offers, why should you not rather judge of them by us that were tried, than boldly judge that of them which they were never tried in, and of which it is impossible for you to have knowledge?

But the later objector telleth us whom he speaketh of. To whom I must say, There were but five or six Nonconformists of all *England*, that ever I heard of, that had any Church-Dignities offered them since his Majesty's Restoration: And of these but three that had Bishopricks offered them, which were *Dr. Edward Reynolds*, *Mr. Calamy*, and my self: And of these three, I refused it the next day, or next save one, after the first offer of it by the Lord Chancellor (for private overtures by inferiors before, I answered with as much refusal as was fit to such uncertain offerers): *Dr. Reynolds* in a very short time accepted: Only *Mr. Calamy* delayed: And if *Dr. Bates* and *Dr. Manton*, who were offered Deanries (as they said, for I am certain of no offer but my own), did delay their refusal, it was on the same account.

And

And the true Reason of Mr. *Calamies* delay (which few men knew better than my self), was because perhaps he would have accepted a Bishoprick as altered by the Kings Declaration about Ecclesiastical affairs, and to be used according to that Declaration, but not according to the ancient Laws and Customs of the Land and Church, though of this much he was unresolved. Therefore he being uncertain whether the Kings Declaration would stand, or pass into a Law, he delayed to see the certainty: And when he saw that the Declaration was dead, and Prelacy was what it was before, he refused it.

And Dr. *Reignolds* professed (to me) to accept it but on the terms of that Declaration.

Now I would put two questions to the Justice of the *Debater*:

1. Whether he do well to mention our refusing of Bishopricks at all, which we our selves so studiously silence? There is now no Refuser living but my self: And I must profess, that to this day I have been so careful to silence it, that I do not believe there are many men, if any alive, that ever heard me mention it, unless in answer to some one that askt me about it, or in confutation of some such aspersions as these. And my reason was, because I apprehend it to favour of *Ingratitude*, and disingenious carriage to my Rulers: If they shall offer me preferment, and I should boast how I refused it, it would seem a casting it in their faces with unthankfulness and contempt. And no man can say that ever I was so unworthy; and few have ever heard me mention it. And yet we cannot be quiet, for accusers; but if we say nothing, such men will.

Q. 2 Whether candor or justice would without any distinction perswade the world, that we had a mind of preferments, and therefore so long delayed; whereof only three men that had the offer of Bishops, one refused in a day or two, and the other presently accepted; And the one that delayed, with the two about Deaneries, were known to do it, that they might know first whether the Kings Declaration would pass into a Law, or be cast by?

And if you proceed to intimate, that we refused but for fear of losing our party. I know no mans heart but my own; and I will help you by some evidence to know it in this matter. 1. Upon the offers by inferior agents that first were made to me, my neighbour Ministers in *Worcestershire* having some knowledge of it, concurred in a Letter to me, neither perswading nor dissuading

me, but thinking me the fittest judg; assured me, that if I accepted it, they should be so far from censuring me for it, as rather to believe that it would be for good, &c. 2. When I refused it, being wary what men might after say, I did it in writing, in a Letter to the Lord Chancellor, giving him those Reasons that did content him, *viz.* If the Kings Declaration were established; though I wisht a perfecter frame of Discipline than it reciteth, yet I was so glad of that much, that I took it to be my duty to promote our Concord with all my power, upon that foundation: And I knew that if I were no Bishop my self, I could far more effectually perswade men to Conformity, than if I were. And this was the reason I gave of my refusal. But if the Kings Declaration should not be ratified (as I verily did believe it would not), I knew if I took a Bishoprick, I must quickly leave it. And then it was better refuse it at the first. And this being our case, methinks I might refer the judgment of it even to the Censurer himself (whose civility to my self through the rest of his *Debate*, I do acknowledge).

15. Obj. *If the King must change or relax his Laws as oft as men will be scrupulous or discontented, there will be no settledness, consistency or order. Your tender Consciences are but tender heads: And soft-headed people must be Rulers of us all, if we must change as oft as their weakness will desire it.*

Ans. You cannot think that when you talk at this rate, the readers and hearers can be all so simple, as not to understand, that your words only signifie that you stand on the higher ground, and not that you have the better cause: For, 1. you were not only importuned before these Laws were made, to have done your part, for a more universal Concord, but you were also Commissioned by the King under his Broad Seal, to consult for the making such alterations in the Liturgy, as were necessary to satisfy tender Consciences: When instead of so doing, you have made the burden heavier than before. And is this a fit plea for men, that before the new Laws and Impositions, had so much power and opportunity to have prevented the matter of our grievance, and were so long importuned to it in vain, to talk *afterward* of the inconvenience of *changing or relaxing* Laws.

2. Have the Nonconformists so often changed their cause, that you should be put to talk of so frequent change of Laws ? Do you not tell them that their arguments and exceptions are but the same that have been answered to their predecessors long ago ? If their cause be the same, *one* alteration since the first Imposition of Conformity would have served their turn. If after the troubles or differences at *Frankford* they had been brought to an agreement by mutual accesses and concessions, what need any more as to the Nonconformists to this day ?

3. Who were the *Changers* when you put your new clauses into the Liturgy (as the doctrine of Baptized Infants salvation, without distinguishing of them that were baptized Rightfully, or without right, &c.) If all the new Oaths, Subscriptions and Declarations be imposed by your advice, surely it was you that were in that the *Changers*. Changes then will do well, and be laudable when they serve your ends, but they are dangerous when they are against your minds. What changes doth *Thorndike* plead for ?

4. When the New Canons and Oath were made 1640, and when Rails and Altars were set up, and bowing towards the Altar recommended, there was no danger in these changes: But if an Oath or Subscription of seven years age be abated, how dangerous would such changes be !

5. The Kings Majesty, when he published his Declaration about Ecclesiastical affairs, did not take those changes there made to be so dangerous: Nor did the Commons in Parliament, who gave him thanks for that Declaration. We may know then by that much, whence the noise of danger cometh.

6. If a needless Subscription or a Ceremony have burdened so many and considerable Subjects an hundred years and more; and if the calamitous attempts of change, that have been made unlawfully in the Land, have been occasioned by mens differences about those things, and if they are still the burden of so many as are now against Conformity: Let impartial persons then be judges, whether the removing of those troublesome unnecessary burdens, were not the likest means imaginable to prevent any more ill attempts of change ?

7. Is there any thing in the world, that you think unlawful ? No doubt there is. Suppose that one thing were by a Law imposed on you: would you think that a change of that Law would
be

be a dangerous thing? and would you exclaim against it as now you do?

What if King *Charles I.* his Concessions in his restraint in the Isle of *Wight*, had past into a Law (as they had if the Parliament had not suddenly been broken), and that Episcopacy had received as great a change as was then intended in those Concessions? Would you have taken the rescinding of all these Laws for a dangerous change?

16 Obj. *It is obedience that becometh tender consciences: Disobedience is as the sin of witchcraft; And would you have any countenance you in so great a sin? If Subjects must have the Laws changed, instead of obeying them, they will be Rulers, and not Subjects. Why are you not more tender of offending and disobeying your Governours?*

Ans. 1. Are not you and we agreed that God is the chief Ruler, and to be first obeyed, and no man against him, but only under him? In this sure we do not differ. To disobey God, is as the sin of witchcraft, and obedience to him is better than sacrifice: And when it is only our obedience to God that maketh us disobey any Governours, judge whether we were not more chargeable with disobedience, if we obeyed men, and disobeyed God. We have no reason to cast our selves under all your reproach, and so much suffering, but only to avoid *disobedience* to God: And when our *costliest obedience*, must go for *odious disobedience*; and if we disobey God to please men, it would go for obedience; what remedy, but to wait for a more righteous judgment, where obedience and disobedience will be better known.

2. Again I ask, Is there any Oath that you dare not take? any thing that you dare not subscribe to and declare? any thing that in Gods worship you durst not use? Suppose that one thing were imposed on you? would you Conform to it or not? If you were but put to subscribe all to the truth of *Dr. Hammonds* opinion, that there were no Presbyters, but Bishops in the Scripture-times, and that no Church then was bigger than one Bishop with his Deacons did officiate with, would not some part of you scruple subscribing to it? If any one thing or word which you judge

judge unlawful to be done or subscribed, were put on you by a Law, would not you then be the Nonconformists? And were it not as easie then to declaim against your Disobedience and Nonconformity, as it is now for you to do it against ours? Might not Volumes as plausibly be written to shew the mischief of Subjects disobedience, and quarrelling with the Laws, and being judges of what is unlawful? And might not you be as largely characterized as a stubborn unquiet people, as we are by you now? So that all this still doth only tell us, that you are got up in the highest seat, from whence you have advantage to look down with scorn upon those that are more fearful of sinning than your selves.

3. We are so *tender* of disobeying our Rulers, that we will do any thing to obey and please them, except disobeying God, and damning our own or others Souls: And if you must have us yet go further, you must excuse us; we had rather go to your prison under all your obloquy. Your furnace is not so hot as Gods.

17 Obj. *The only reason (say most of them) why they forsook their Ministry was, that they durst not abjure the Covenant: Dispense with them for this, and they are Conformists. But if that be the only thing they scruple, then why are they not Conformists in all other particulars, against which they pretended no such exceptions? And what doeth renouncing the Covenant concern the people, &c?* Thus the Ecclesiastical Polititian, Pag. 242, 243.

Ans. 1. Is this flaming-hot Disputer so much better acquainted with us, than we are with our selves and one another? Hath he talkt with the *most* of us? or have the *most* ever said or written, that it is only the Covenant that we stick at? I must profess, of all the Nonconformists that ever I knew or spake with, I never knew any one of this mind, which he saith [*the most of them say*] they are of. Nay I never heard of any one Nonconformist of that mind. And if the world and posterity most be told so confidently, that *most say* and hold that, which I that am supposed so much on their side, did never know nor hear of any one man that said or held, you may judge what a history posterity is like to have of this age; and also with whom we have to do, and upon what terms. I confess I know one that hath suffered the

the loss of all these many years, and been denied so much as leave to teach School, that is for Episcopacy, Liturgy and Ceremonies as lawful, and never took the Covenant, nor was ever for it, nor for the Parliaments War, but against both, that yet cannot disoblige every one that ever did take the Covenant, so far as is required to Conformity, nor cannot *subscribe* or declare *Assent and Consent* to every word in the three Books so to be consented to. But such a one as sticks at the Covenant only, I never knew nor heard of.

3. But if the accusers of the Brethren do believe themselves, they tell the world the little charity that is among them; who had rather so many Ministers were silenced, (to say nothing of their bodily sufferings), and so many thousand souls want their Ministry, than *abjuring* the Covenant should be dispensed with, when a fuller security for loyalty and peace is offered.

4. It is either the *Episcopal*, *Presbyterian*, or *Independend* Nonconformists (for all these sorts there be at least) that he meaneth, by *most of them*, or *most* as mixt: 1. The *Episcopal* Nonconformists are not for the Covenant, but stick most at consenting and swearing to the *English* Hierarchy and Discipline, and Church-state, as it differeth from the old *Episcopacy* described in *Archbishop Ushers* Reduction. 2. The *Presbyterians* surely have told the world by Books enow, that they are Nonconformists in more things than *abjuring* the Covenant. And in good sadness, doth not *England* know that (call them what you will) the Divines commissioned by the King did give their reasons against more? 3. And the *Independents* are so far from being to be numbered with his [*most of them*] that I know not if you would free them from the rest of Conformity, whether the leaders would not yield in this. For when *Scotland* was invaded, and Mr. *Love* Beheaded, it was pleaded that the Covenant was as an Almanack out of date. And Mr. *Eaton* hath written a Book to prove, that the Covenant, and the Oath of *Allegiance* bind not.

5. But as for [*abjuring*] I never heard that it was required of Ministers; and how can that possibly be their only Nonconformity, which never was imposed on them.

6. But what he and others mean to pretend that the Laity are unconcerned in the renouncing of the Covenant, when it is known by Printed *Laws*, and by *practice*, that all the *Cities* and *Corporations* in *England*, as to the *Governing* or *trusted* part, are constitu-

red by the Renunciation of the Covenant, and also all the *Vestries*; as the *Corporation Act*, and the *Vestry Act* declare, is but more matter of wonder to men, that have not been used to such things! So many new Printed Laws, and the visible state of all the Cities and Corporations in *England* are not evidence enough on a Non-conformists part, to decide a controversie of fact. But if they shall say that they meant that the Laity are not on such terms forbidden to come to Church: I answer, if we also had learned the trick of speaking, writing, and swearing in *universal terms* (or equipollent), and meaning not *universally*, but particularly, as many do, we could say, or subscribe, or swear as far as you desire us.

18 Obj. *If you be tolerated, why not all others as well as you? And so the Quakers and the Papists may come in. And it's well if the Presbyterians do not thus let in Popery.*

Ans. 1. What if the Law imposed one word on you which you could not conform to, and you differed from the Church in nothing else? what answer would you give to such an Objection as this, which equally excludeth *Chillingworth* and *Knot*? Would you not say that a difference should be made? O how hardly can men *understand* that are unwilling to *know*! How easie a case were this to the willing!

Mr. John Rogers of *Deilham*, *Mr. John Ball*, and sometime *Mr. Dod*, and *Mr. Hilderham*, had liberty to preach without conforming; and did it infer the necessity of such a Toleration as you talk of?

2. I pray you take heed of bringing Conformity more into contempt than yet it is, by seeming to judge it such a thing as men will not yield to without constraint and punishment. Take off the penalty of *subscribing*, declaring, crossing, &c. and all that are willing will use them without force. And if most must be forced, it intimates that they do not like or love them. What good doth *subscribing* a sentence which he believeth not, do either to the soul of the liar himself, or to the Church?

3. If so large a Toleration as you talk of be so dangerous, and the *Presbyterians* are like to occasion it for their liberty, why will you not prevent so great a danger at so cheap a rate, as it might be pre-

prevented at? Are you indeed against a Toleration of Heresie and Popery, and yet would you rather venture on the danger of it, than abate to Protestants a needless ceremony or subscription?

4. I cannot tell whether you are indeed such strangers to the thoughts and talk of the people of *England* concerning your selves as you seem to be. If you are, I will not now tell you what they say of you. But they rejoyce that they have a King so far from Popery, that he hath by a Law made it a heinous crime for any to vent any suspicions of his constancy (which through so many temptations he hath approved.)

And indeed it were a crime that deserved no small punishment, as imputing that to our Sovereign which is scarce to be thought of a rational man; even to give up most of his power and Kingdom to a foreign Usurper after his power is shaken off, and that without any cause. Princes that ever got loose from the *Roman* yoke, do not use to come under it again; at least, except as King *John* resigned his Crown, constrained by meer necessity. But *Godfrey Goodman* a *Papist* was the last Bishop of *Gloucester*; and I must profess that if I were a *Papist* and studied to help them to a Toleration, I would by writings, and by all my interest, endeavour to bring as many more of you as I could into a necessity of seeking Liberty or Toleration, that when the party that needed and sought it were considerable, and the cry for it were great, we might look for our part among the rest, and say, why not we as well as others?

And yet I would have the *Papists* and all conscientious persons used like men, and not with any cruelty or inhumanity.

19 Obj. *There was indeed a necessity of much Preaching, before the world was converted to Christianity: but there is no such necessity now when we are all Christians.*

Ans. This is fully answered before. Do you think the bare name of a Christian and his Baptism, will save those thousands that know not what Christianity is? or those that live in enmity, contempt or neglect of the Laws of Christ? Is a wicked Christian that sinneth against the greatest means, and his own Covenant, vow, and profession, a happier man than the poor Infidels that never heard the Gospel? If not, these have need of teaching here at home,

home, as well as men in foreign parts. But I will add no more to my former answer.

20 Obj. *But why do you not go preach among the Indians, or in other lands where there is more need, if liberty of Preaching be all that you desire?*

Ans. 1. Some are sickly and weak, and some aged, unable to travel. 2. Some have families which they are obliged to, and must not desert, and cannot carry with them. If you say, they should have kept themselves without: I answer, they were born in a land where good men were suffered to serve God quietly, and therefore they thought they might fix themselves therein. But if they could have foreseen that they should have been forbidden to Preach at home, I believe that many would not only have forborn Marriage, but also have set themselves to learn some foreign languages that they might have been able to Preach abroad. But, 3. our great impediment is, that we have not the vulgar tongue of any other Country, and therefore cannot preach to any of the vulgar there; and if we could in a long time learn the *Tartarian* or *Indian* tongue, &c. a half learnt broken tongue doth but make the speaker ridiculous to the vulgar. (To say nothing of our want of maintenance to sustain us thither, and there) For my own part, had I strength and any vulgar tongue, which I might use in Preaching in other lands, I think I should have left *England* long ago, and not been an eye-sore to you so long.

21 Objct. *Have not the Friendly Debate, and the Politician fully and unanswerably opened the folly and villany of your Religion? and can you yet for shame desire leave to preach and propagate such a Religion as that?*

Ans. Because so great prejudice is taken against us from those Books, I intended in the end to have given a full answer to all that concerneth us; not in their mode, but in my own, that is in certain Propositions containing our judgment and our reasons about

prevented at? Are you indeed against a Toleration of Heresie and Popery, and yet would you rather venture on the danger of it, than abate to Protestants a needless ceremony or subscription?

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home, as well as men in foreign parts. But I will add no more to my former answer.

20 Obj. *But why do you not go preach among the Indians, or in other lands where there is more need, if liberty of Preaching be all that you desire?*

Ans. 1. Some are sickly and weak, and some aged, unable to travel. 2. Some have families which they are obliged to, and must not desert, and cannot carry with them. If you say, they should have kept themselves without: I answer, they were born in a land where good men were suffered to serve God quietly, and therefore they thought they might fix themselves therein. But if they could have foreseen that they should have been forbidden to Preach at home, I believe that many would not only have forborn Marriage, but also have set themselves to learn some foreign languages that they might have been able to Preach abroad. But, 3. our great impediment is, that we have not the vulgar tongue of any other Country, and therefore cannot preach to any of the vulgar there; and if we could in a long time learn the *Tartarian* or *Indian* tongue, &c. a half learnt broken tongue doth but make the speaker ridiculous to the vulgar. (To say nothing of our want of maintenance to sustain us thither, and there) For my own part, had I strength and any vulgar tongue, which I might use in Preaching in other lands, I think I should have left *England* long ago, and not been an eye-sore to you so long.

21 Object. *Have not the Friendly Debate, and the Politician fully and unanswerably opened the folly and villany of your Religion? and can you yet for shame desire leave to preach and propagate such a Religion as that?*

Ans. Because so great prejudice is taken against us from those Books, I intended in the end to have given a full answer to all that concerneth us; not in their mode, but in my own, that is in certain Propositions containing our judgment and our reasons about

those matters, which I leave out now to avoid length, having written Books enow to declare what my Religion is, and so have others. And therefore now only say this in general concerning the Authors, and their dealing with us.

1. As to the *men*, I judg them to be of more than ordinary parts, as to Ratiocination and expression; and had they with humility, patience and impartiality taken but a dozen or twenty years more time to have furnished their minds according to their capacity, before they had permitted themselves with so great confidence to say what they have said, I believe they would have been as excellent persons as most ages have produced. But they have put off the habit of *little children* too soon.

2. I imagin by their writings, that they have been unhappy in their converse and acquaintance; and that they have had more to do with Sectaries, and weak women and boys, and the weaker sort of serious Christians among those called Puritans, than with the sober understanding sort; and so judg of the *party* by such as they have been acquainted with. For most of the weak expressions and passages which they fill their Books with, I have heard from some Sectaries, or true Fanaticks, and from some weak women and ignorant persons, but never from the grave and sober sort of Non-conformists. Nor have I used to converse with *many* of the Laity, that talk at so low a rate, as they feigned them to talk.

3. I doubt also that their converse hath been more at the Universities, and with Scholars, and with the richer and well-bred sort of persons, besides those Sectaries, than with Plowmen and other of the lower rank; and therefore that they are strangers to the condition of the vulgar, which faithful Country Ministers know, whose work hath been to Catechise them, and personally instruct them.

4. They cannot but know that most of those things which they blame in the people, which are real weakneses and faults, we tell them of as loud as they do, and as plainly as they, though not so wrathfully or flamingly as they. Mr. *Pool's Vox clamantis* hath told the silenced Ministers even in *Latin* in the hearing of the world, of more of their faults, then both these Authors could remember; and not only in my *Directions for weak Christians*, but in divers other Books, I have dealt as plainly with the people.

5. Saving therefore the *Debaters* civility to my self, I must ask him, whether it favoured of common equity and justice, to make the

the *Nonconformist* in the general, the author or owner of all those weaknesses, follies, impudences, falsehoods, &c. which he could fasten only on Sectaries, or on the ignoranter sort. And especially when scarcely ever Books were written by any man as against *Nonconformists* that so little touch upon *Nonconformity* is felt, or any of the points in difference? Is *Gerſon Bucer*, or *Alciare Damascenus*, or *Anselm Fresh-Suit*, or any other of the *Nonconformists* writings answered there, except a late *Nebushtan*, that few men own, and he thought he could more easily say somewhat to?

6. If he say that he told us that he spake it not of all: I answer, what if he had put the word [*Christians*] instead of the word [*Nonconformist*] and said that *Christians* hold all those sortish and impudent opinions, but yet said, It is not *all Christians*, had this been justice to Christianity? and yet it is true; for if *Nonconformists* be Christians, then Christians hold what they hold. He that heareth such a word [*Christians, or Protestants, or Nonconformists* have a foolish Religion], doth suppose it to be *locutio formalis*, and that the meaning is, [As Christians, or as Protestants, or as Nonconformists, their Religion is foolish.] And for the Author to say when he hath done, [I meant not, *All Christians, All Protestants, All Nonconformists*] is to say, I speak not of them as such. What then? Why, as *Antinomians*, or as ignorant unlearned people. But why then did you not charge your fooleries only on Antinomians, Sectaries, and ignorant people, and make them as such only the actors in your scene? and not as *Christians, Protestants, &c.* I know the name *Christians* is more venerable than *Protestant*, or *Nonconformist*. But the injustice is as palpable in the one as in the other. And the cause or the principle is bad that can engage men in such unrighteousness, and make them so strange to themselves as not to see it, yea to proceed impenitently in it, even when *Righteousness* is one of the things which they write for, as neglected by them whom they endeavour to disgrace. It is an ill cause that produceth such effects, though a quick and hasty wit can write another Volume to defend it; till love it self shall sit in judgment, and condemn all the issues of uncharitable wrath.

The cause of *Nonconformity* as of old, and as owned now by us, was punctually expressed to you in our many Papers given in when we vainly attempted unity; and the new Conformity is known by the Acts which are lately made. And what is the matter of the *Debaters* Dialogues to any of this? Doth any Act of Parliament

liament forbid men to say, *I am well through mercy.* Or is there any Nonconformity in that speech (or any unfitness either.) And so of abundance of such other passages.

6. And is it for the interest of *Justice, honesty, and charity*, to perswade the world that the Nonconformists *Religion* is foolish, senseless and unpeaceable, when they profess to own no Religion at all, but naked Christianity? Is Christianity so vile a thing? And indeed is not *your Religion* the same with *ours*? I thought we had not been of *different Religions*, but only of different opinions about Discipline and modes of worship in the same Religion. But you know your selves better than we do. But if really you are of another *Religion* from us, why were there never any attempts to reconcile us in Doctrinals, when the work of reconciliation was (vainly) on foot? Why did you never charge us with errors in Doctrine? Nay why did Dr. *Cornelius Burgess* his Reasons for Reformation in Doctrine, Discipline, &c. so much offend, as you may see even in the Kings Declaration about Ecclesiastical Affairs, where he takes it ill that some pretend that we differ in Doctrinals. But now the *Religion* of one must be wise, and the other foolish. The King there declareth our unity in Religion, after his trial of both sides. And this Author maketh our Religions as different as light and darkness, that is, as wisdom and folly.

Our *Religion* as to its containing Rule, is the holy Canonical Scripture. Is that foolish and seditious? we profess to have no more. The Explication of the *Nonconformists* sense of it, you have much in the Assemblies Catechisms and Confession? Why wrote you not to prove them to be another Religion? Our Books also are abroad, Mr. *Hildershams, Greenhams, Hierons, Dods, Amesius, Bains, Bradshaws, Cartwrights, Mr. Gataker, Mr. Vines, Mr. Anth. Burgess, Mr. Shaws, Mr. Hows, Mr. Allens*, and an hundred more. What false Religion do they contain? I have told you my Religion oft enough, especially in my Reasons for the *Christian Religion*, and in my *Confession*. And if it be not false and foolish, then it is not the Nonconformists as *such*, that is so; for a *quatenus ad omne* you may justly argue.

Yea the Author is pleased to favour me with some Vindication, and to blame others for opposing me; and is not that enough to prove that such opinions as he disliketh, are no part of Nonconformity, as now in Controversie.

But he will give me occasion to tell him, how much I differ from his mind and way; when as there are near thirty or forty Books written against me, in whole or in part (by men of several Sects and parties) and yet I fall out with none of them all; nor charge them with such foolish Religions, unless they be downright Apostates or Hereticks. Nor would I silence any one of them that is a sincere Preacher of the Christian Faith. My provocations its like have been more than this Authors ever were. But must I forgive *enemies*, and not *friends*? Do we contend for our selves, or for Truth, and love, and unity, and peace? It is some honour from those adversaries both to me, and to my brethren, that I am called their *Antisignanus*, who have written such abundance of Books against me? For it seems that we forgive and love each other. If you say that it is because we now agree in Nonconformity: I answer, 1. It was so before. 2. And you suppose us as little agreed in that; and indeed many censure me more for differing from them there, than in all the rest.

7. And is it not as valid arguing, to say, *Mr. Hilder sham*, *Dr. Reynolds*, *Amesius*, *Bradshaw*, *Burges*, &c. have written soundly and learnedly; Ergo, the Religion of the *Nonconformists* is wise and sound; as to say, *Mr. Bridge* one of the five Dissenters from the *Presbyterians* hath some harsh expressions, and *Mr. T.W.* hath some little sententious jingles (such as *Conformists* most abound with), Ergo, the *Nonconformists* Religion is foolish.

8. But it may be you will say, that the *Nonconformists* must be judged of, not by an odd person as your self is, but by the major part? *Ans.* 1. It never goeth right among Divines, when they judge *Causes* by *persons*, contrary to signed avowed professions. Do they print and publish their professed Religion to the World? and will you measure and denominate the Religion of the *Nonconformists*, by two or three mens Writings (against which also you have no more to say)? 2. And why did you not prove that it is the major part (or one of an hundred) that are guilty of the real weaknesses which you mention (for all that you find fault with, are not weaknesses)? Are the two or three that you named, the major part of Eighteen hundred? What of all this have you to charge on those forenamed? or on *Mr. John Ball*, *Mr. John Paget*, *Mr. Langley*, &c. or on *Dr. Twisse*, *Dr. Arrowsmith*, and the rest of that Assembly? or on *Dr. Tuckney*, *Dr. Langley*, *Dr. Staunton*, *Dr. Seaman*, *Dr. Manton*, *Dr. Bates*,

Mr.

Mr. Bull, Mr. Wadsworth, Dr. Annesly, and abundance more about the City, or on the generality of the silenced Ministers in all the Counties of the Land?

9. But do you consider how heinously you dishonour the Conformists, by the disparity of the charge which you lay on the Nonconformists, and which they have laid on you? I am not justifying either of your accusations: But if I were a stranger in *England*, and had seen the Chair-man of the Committee of Parliament publish his *Century of Conformists* accused on witness, of so many Crimes (especially drunkenness, and negligence, and insufficiency in so many), and had seen the like charges before the Committees of the several Counties attested on Oath, and had heard both your *Isabads* Groans, and the *Gloucester* Cobblers History of the present Ministry: And then had read the most learned and sharp of the Nonconformists adversaries, charging them with heart-hypocrisie, with disobedience to those Laws for Oaths and Ceremonies which they think are contrary to the Laws of God, and with *cutting faces*, and *prating phrases*, and incongruous expressions in praying and preaching to the vulgar, &c. I should suspect that their cases were not alike.

10. Is it a thing possible that a Divine in *England* should not know, that there are in all Countries such Readers, and young, raw, ignorant Conformable Preachers (O that they were but here and there one), that in understanding, in method, in phrase, and all Ministerial abilities, may learn seven years and seven, before they are like to reach the measure of *W. B.* and *T. W.* whom he reproveth? And could he forget that it is as just and solid reasoning to say, This multitude of Conformists frequently speak nonsense confusedly, &c. *Ergo*, the Conformists have such a Religion: as to say, *W. B.* and *T. W.* did not express this or that congruously: *Ergo*, the Nonconformists Religion is such.

22 Obj. You overthrow all principles of Government, while you say that the Magistrate may not command things evil by accident; And while you allow doubting or scrupling persons to disobey authority, as oft as they are but pleased to question their Commands; whereas if you are uncertain whether the matter be lawful, you are bound to obey; because you are certain that Governours must be obeyed,

obeyed, and being uncertain that the thing is evil, the certain part must prevail against the uncertain.

Ans. We have long been silent at such accusations, supposing by this time they would have been ashamed of themselves: Had we read such Moral Divinity, as some would teach us, in Father Banny, Escobar, or other such Jesuits, we had been like to have found it in the Collection of their Morals, which the *Jansenists* published.

1. I never read or heard man yet say, that the *Magistrate* may not command any thing evil by accident: But I have said my self, that *His Commands of things evil by accident may be sinful*; that is, that it is not all things that are evil by accident that he may command. But because some men will not understand till they are constrained against their wills; I shall elsewhere open the truth about this so plainly, as that they shall hardly avoid the understanding of it, but by refusing to read it: And I will shew them what it is to maintain, that men may command any thing that is evil by accident only.

2. And the other accusation is the forgery of passionate enmity also; we believe that a man is not to obey authority at all times, whenever he doubteth of the matter commanded, or in every case of doubting: But we never thought that all doubtings will excuse his obedience. We use to speak more distinctly, and leave them to confusion, that either cannot distinguish, or must have troubled waters to fish in, for matter of calumniation. Of this also I shall elsewhere give you a satisfactory account of our judgment. Done since in my 2d Plea for Peace.

23 Obj. But the grand accusation against us by Dr. Heylin in his life of A. B. Laud, and elsewhere, is for Calvinism, or Puritanism, in Doctrine, against that which is commonly called Arminianism; which he maketh the matter of our great contentions and calamities: And many other say as he: And Mr. Thorndike carrieth it yet much higher, accusing us not only of the Doctrine of imputed Righteousness, but others in which we have departed from the Church of Rome. See his Just Weights and Measures, and his Greater Volume.

Ans. 1. By this it further appeareth, how unjustly and partially we are used, and how unnecessary they themselves hold *Unity* in Doctrine it self to be, in matters which some account so great to the liberty of Preaching the Gospel. For in all the *Arminian* Controversies, the Conformists differ among themselves as much as we do from any of them, if not more. Nothing more common now in our Pulpits, than for one man to preach up *Free-will*, and another to preach it down (and neither of them know what *Free will* is); and for one to preach for *absolute Election*, *perseverance of all Saints*, &c. and another to preach the contrary, and shew the tendency of these opinions to all wickedness. And yet all these men are suffered to preach, because they all *subscribe* the same doctrine, though they neither believe nor preach the same: The Articles of the Church of *England* are *subscribed* by them all: They *Assent* and *Consent* to all the Doctrine of the Church. And indeed, is it because the Articles are not *intelligible*? or have they contrary *meanings* to fit the use of every subscriber? Are they hot to one, and cold to another? Or rather, do many of the Subscribers take heed of *Tenderness* of *Conscience*, because it is but *tenderness* of *Head*, and is more sensible of hurt and smart than a feared Conscience is, or is a *word* and *thing* that is grown into disgrace and scorn in our times?

For my own part, I doubt not but the Compilers of the Articles and Liturgy were in these things of *Augustines* judgment, who was for absolute Election, but for no other Reprobation but non-election, and the decree of damnation and desertion only upon foresight of sin. But as to the differences themselves, it would grieve a man of any understanding to read such a History as Dr. *Heylin* Life of the Archbishop, which intimateth to the world, that such points as these were the occasion of all the contrivances against each other, and of the enmities and calamities which these Kingdoms have undergone! When-as the things are such as never bred any such dissention in the first ages of the Church, nor would do among us, if we had their piety and simplicity.

By Gods mercy, since the writing of this I have published it, called *Catholic Theology*.

I long ago began a Treatise (which the agitations of my Troublers have interrupted) to reconcile the *Arminians* and *Anti-Arminians* in these matters, in which I should easily have manifested, how unfit such Subjects were to be so fiercely and implacably contended about. And because I know not whether ever I shall live

live to re-assume it (being toss'd about, and having neither health nor liberty for any settled habitation), I must give the judicious a few hints of the *Media* of Conciliation which I would have used.

1. I would have distinguished and reduced the Controversies unto three sorts: First those that are only *de nomine*, and seem to the unskilful to be *de rebus*, which are more than most imagine: And these an explication would have ended. Secondly, Those that are about things *unrevealed*, and unknown to mortals; which are some that are hottest contended about: And these all must grant are to be cast aside. Thirdly, those that are *real differences*, fit for our disputes: which I should prove, 1. to be very few. 2. Far from the foundation, and of no such moment as ignorant, self-conceited, furious disputers would make the world believe they are. 3. And that they are of so great *difficulty*, that all sober Christians should easily bear with one another about them.

2. I would shew the necessity of *beginning* our Controversies about the *temporary Effects*, and not about the *eternal Decrees*, because as the first do more concern us; so they are *natura*, more within our knowledge: And then the questions about the Decrees, will more easily be decided.

3. I would open distinctly the Covenant of Grace made universally with mankind, 1. Before Christ. 1. With *Adam*. 2. With *Noe*. And 2. after Christs Incarnation: and distinguish it from the narrower particular Covenant with *Abraham* and the *Israelites*. And I would open the nature of the *Universal pardon* and *Gift of life*, which God hath made through Christ in the Gospel, to mankind, upon the Conditions which are to be punctually explained; which Conditional Justification or Pardon is acknowledged by all.

4. I would open the nature and extent of that common operative Grace of the Holy Ghost, which is given to those that are yet un sanctified; And I would prove from the case of *Adam*, that there hath been such a thing as *Grace sufficient*, or *necessary* to the effect, which through mans fault was not effectual; and which without any more helps, man *could* and *ought* to have made effectual, or to have acted by. And then I would prove that *ad aliquid*, there is still such a thing as *Grace necessary* or *sufficient*,

(that is, without which men *cannot*, and by which they *can*, use certain means which God hath made the duty of all mankind to use, which have a tendency to their recovery): And that certainly no part of the world is left under the first Covenant of innocency, (though under the precept or duty of it) but are under a Law or Covenant of Grace, as that Law by which they are governed and judged (though all *Consent* not); And therefore that all are under such obligations, to use such means for their recovery as are vouchsafed and appointed them; and are condemnable if they use them not; and need not fear using them (faithfully) in vain.

5. I would open the nature of *Liberty* and *Free-will*; and above all make plain the distinction between the *Essential, Natural Liberty*, and the *mutable Moral Liberty*; and shew that *mans will* is a *self-determining* faculty, supposing the necessary objects, and intellectual apprehension; and that it is part of Gods Image on it, so to be *Dominam suorum actuum*; and that every man hath this *natural liberty of willing*, not willing or nilling (which Mr. Le Blank hath most judiciously opened in his late *Theses*); But no man hath more of the *Moral liberty*, which is a freedom from a vicious disposition, than he hath (either *special* or *common*) Grace.

6. I should shew how the want of the *Natural liberty* is a full justification for omission or action; and that the want of *Moral liberty*, being nothing else but want of *Dispositive willingness*, or of a *right will*, is the very matter of guilt, and aggravateth all actual and omisive sin.

7. I should open the nature of [*Power*], and shew what goeth to make [*Power*] in a proper sense: And whether God may be said to give *sufficient Grace* to believe, when he giveth proper *Power* to believe? And that *Grace sufficient ad agere, est efficax ad posse*: And what *Austin* meant by *Posse Credere est omnium; Credere vero fidelium*. Especially I should distinguish of *Natural* and *Moral Power*, and shew that no man wanteth the former, which is the *faculty* *in self*; And I should shew, that *Moral Power* sometime signifieth *strength*, which not only can perform an act, but do it *easily*; and so it is nothing but *special Grace*, or the *Holy disposition and liveliness* of the Soul, by which it hath such a degree of power to things spiritual: But sometimes *Moral Power* signifieth no more, but that the *Natural Power* is not so far debarred of *Moral helps*, and *disposition* to the action, but that it may

may be properly said to be a *Power Morally*, with that measure of Moral helps it hath; and that it is not a thing *impossible* properly, for the effect to be produced without any more grace. And I would shew how far this extendeth. But above all, that confused Disputers are never in one sentence to be suffered to cheat their Readers or Hearers, with [*Can*] and [*Cannot*] with [*Power* and *Impotency*] unexplained, but still forced to shew what sort of *Power* or *Impotency* they mean. Every one hath the *Natural Power* of *Repenting* and *believing*, which is not plenarily and properly called a *Power* to that which from any other Cause remaineth simply and naturally impossible; nor is it a *Moral Power* to that which remaineth *Morally* impossible: Every man hath a *Moral Power* so far as he hath *Grace*, and that is in *all men* to be *better* than they are, and *omit more evil, and to do more good*; but only the *fajthful* have *Moral Power* in the more *excellent* degree.

8. I should shew that the disputes about the manner of Gods operation or influx on the soul, whether *Physical*, or *Moral*, are usually managed to more deception than instruction: And that no mortal man can tell just how God worketh on the Soul.

9. I should shew what acts God doth in his three distinct Relations, as *Owner*, *Ruler* and *Benefactor*: And how *equally* he deal-eth as *Ruler*, both in his *Laws* and *Judgment*, avoiding all respect of persons: But how far as *Owner* and *Benefactor* he is free, and maketh an *Inequality* in the distribution of his *Mercies*, and giveth more to some than to others, without respect to *Merit*.

10. And that accordingly, 1. he giveth the Gospel to one Nation, rather than to another; and to one person, rather than to another, without any different demerit of theirs. 2. And also giveth *such Grace* to some as shall *infallibly* convert them, with an *absolute will* to accomplish the effect, when that person no more deserveth it, than some that never have it.

11. But yet that no man is shut out of a state of *Grace*, but for or by his wilful refusal or neglect of it; nor any man denied any *necessary Grace*, but for the *neglect* or *abuse* of some sufficient antecedent grace: And though God *give* grace without and against desert, he never *denieth* it to any without *desert*; and that more than the *desert* of Original sin (not now interrupting our discourse with the Case of Infants).

12. That when common *Grace* hath brought one man much *nearer* the Kingdom of God, than another, the same degree of
further

further Divine operation and help, which would be uneffectual to make a *distant* and *unprepared* man a *believer*, may make him a believer that is *nearer* and more prepared.

13. All effectual grace proceedeth from an *effectual will* of God to work it.

14. The great question therefore, *Whether none are converted but by special effectual grace? or any also by that which in its own nature is merely sufficient, and made effectual by mans will?* is captious, and partly past the reach of man: It being certain, 1. That Grace is the chief agent in all that believe; 2. That the *will* and *mind* of man is the *immediate* actor in believing; 3. That whoever believeth hath such grace as cometh from an *absolute, certain, fixed will of God*, that it shall attain the effect. 4. And that in what *degrees* of *influx* God worketh on one that is converted, more or less than on another, is no enquiry for any man that knoweth what he talketh of? Nor can we well tell when one mans will doth do its part better than anothers, by the same degree of Grace.

15. I should shew when *Free-will* and *Necessary* are consistent, or inconsistent.

16. And also how God hath his will, as much when man hath greatest freedom, as if he had none; and that man hath as much *freedom* under the *will* and *decrees* of God, as if they were none; Nay without them as a cause he could have no freedom.

17. I should shew that the *Calvinists* (that run not with some few into extremity) do acknowledge as much common Grace to all men, as the *Arminians* do; For they confess the universal, conditional promise or Covenant; and they say, that all men that hear the Gospel have pardon and sanctification, and salvation brought to their own *wills*; and that if they refuse it not, they they shall have it, and that they have the *posse credere*: And the difference is, that the *Arminian* thinketh that *none* ordinarily have *any more* than this, with such perswasions as make it *possible* antecedently; but the *Calvinists* think the *elect* have *more*, that is, that Grace maketh them *actually willing*; which is certain: But how *Grace* and the *will* concur, is as uncertain as aforesaid.

18. All creatures are Passive or Receptive as to Gods efficiency, or influx on them; And so is mans soul; And therefore it is true that it is merely Passive not only in receiving the first gracious influx of God, but in all the influxes which it is under in every action

action of our lives: But it is a truly *vital, active soul or power*, which is thus passive first; and therefore is ever the *next agent* in all its *Acts* of believing, &c. and never *merely passive*; for that were a contradiction. Nor can it be proved that the soul is *merely recipient* or *passive* as to the *true habits* of Grace, but only as to that *Influx* which exciterh us to *act*, and by that act (done by God and the Soul) the *habit* is produced; which yet is called *Infused*, because it is caused by a special *Influx*; what ever more than this is *possible*, no more can be proved *de facto*.

19. Our differences about Universal Redemption, and of the Decrees, depend on those about *Operations*, and are easily reconciled with them. Christ died for all men, so far as to procure them all the Grace that he giveth them. And he giveth all men the Universal Grace fore described; the Conditional pardon, &c. therefore so far he died for them. But of this I have written a peculiar Treatise (not yet published.)

20. The Doctrine of Gods *antecedent* and *consequent will* must be better explained, as being but his *governing will*, so called from *Legislation* and *Judgment*, which are the antecedent and consequent parts of Government.

21. So must Gods will *de naturalibus & moralibus*, and his *Legislative* antecedent will be well opened, and the uselessness and confusion of the distinction of *signi & bene placiti* manifested.

22. I would prove that God hath no Decree or will of meer Negatives, as not to give grace, faith, glory, not to save, &c. and therefore hath no *Decree to permit*, because *permitting* is but *not-hindering*, which is *nothing*. By which one sort of Reprobation (as now called) will be disproved.

23. That Reprobation to *positive damnation*, is only upon *fore-seen*, and not decreed impenitency or unbelief.

24. That Election and Reprobation therefore go not *pari passu*, but as *Austin* and *Prosper* taught, the one is a positive absolute Will or Decree of God, the other only upon *fore-sight*.

26. Predetermination by Physical premotion to evil materially, and as necessary to all actions natural and free, is to be left to the *Dominicans*, and not owned by any that know the consequences.

27. The numbering and ordering of Decrees *secundum ordinem intentionis & executionis* is to be discussed, and the vanity of mens fictions hereabout made known.

28. The nature of *futurition*, and the falshood of founding it necessarily in an *eternal cause*, is to be opened.

29. The foolish disputes of the manner of Gods knowing future contingents, are (by clear reason) to be cast out of the Church and Schools.

30. In a word, a convenient explication will manifest that the difference in all these Controversies really is next to none, except in the point of Perseverance; and that in that point those that hold with *Augustine* and *Prosper*, that not all the truly justified, and sanctified do persevere, but *all the Elect*; and those that hold that *all the justified and sanctified are Elect*, and do persevere; have great reason to number this difference among those School-disputes which should break no charity nor communion among Christians. But of *Perseverance* I have long ago published my thoughts in a peculiar Treatise.

I have said thus much to shew the world not only that we ought not to be silenced or oppressed as an odious sort of people, for those Doctrines which some abhor (when we subscribe to the *same Articles* of the Churches Doctrine as they do); but also that it is a mixture of that ignorance and pride which is the disease and calamity of Church-men as well as of the world, which hath caused most of the heats on both sides, and the Cruelties in *Holland*, or in *England*, thence proceeding about these Controversies. And that when men have more *Understanding* or *Humility*, these differences will but little disturb the Church.

And again I say, that those Church snuffers who put out the lights, should have remembered our moderation in this point, that whereas Parliaments have complained so long and zealously against *Arminianism*, and when Bishops have been so hot about it against each other, (as *Heylin* will tell you of *Abbot* and *Laud*, &c.) and when yet the Conformists preach against one another about it, yet did we never speak a word to the King or them of any such matter. Because if all men will subscribe the same wholesome Doctrine of the *Articles*, we cannot hinder any from dissembling, and destroying what they do subscribe.

Obj. 24. Agreement with the Church of Rome is more desirable on the terms described by Dr. Heylin in *A. B. Lauds life*, and you would make it impossible?

Ans.

Ans. We are for a just concord with all Christians ; but true Popery we cannot agree with ; and as to *Papists* they are but a part (a third or fourth part saith your Primate Bishop *Bramhall*) of the Catholick Church. We must unite with the whole Church, or else we are Schismatics. To embody in the faction of the *Papists* is as Schismatical, as to do it with a smaller faction. And if you will unite with all Christians, I still say, you must unite on *Vinc. Lirinensis* terms, on that which all Christians are agreed in, that indeed deserve the name of Christians.

Now if you establish your concord on the Scripture, and on universal terms, all Christians in the world will confess that your Religion, yea all your Religion is certain truth, and that it hath also all things universally necessary to Salvation ; and this is a fair degree of unity, though they say that yet you want their Traditions. And then you can tell a *Papist* quickly, where your Religion was before *Luther*, Even where ever the Scripture was received. And you do not wishfully and resolvedly cut off your selves from Communion with all the Protestant Churches, who do not hold the Traditions and Decrees of *Rome*. But you are united with all the Christians in the world in Christianity, and so far as they have any union among themselves. And then all those that will needs go further, do run the hazard of their own additions. We will live in peace with them, if they will live in peace with us. But if the *Papists* be such men, that they will hold no communion with any that hold not all their Religion, that is, all the Decrees of their Councils, than neither *Abassines*, *Armenians*, *Greeks*, nor Protestants can be received into their Communion. And do you think it desirable to comply and embody with them in such a schism and factious combination against all the rest of the Churches of God ? If you will deal like Christians, Catholicks and wise men, let us first be as moderate as may be in our Doctrinals, and not pretend that we are further disagreed with *Papists* or any other Christians than indeed we are. I am one of those who believe that in many Doctrines, quarrelsome ignorant men have made differences where there are none; and have made those that be seem, wider than they are; cut off these superfluities and spare not; and then reduce your terms of *Union and Communion* to the Primitive simplicity of *Doctrine, Worship, and Discipline*; and if any will have more, let it be a matter of liberty and not of necessity; or if they will not be limited as we are, let them take their scope. Or if you your

selves will needs have more, yet hold it with liberty, as matter of conveniency, and not of necessity to the union or communion of the Church. If you will take this course, we shall deny *Papists* no love, no peace, no communion with us on our terms (which they justify for the truth of them) in our Churches. And if they will fly from us, and refuse our Communion, or will put unlawful terms on us, and drive us from them, we shall have no accusation for this by our consciences, or any wise man. He is the Schismatick that maketh communion impossible by his Additions or Impositions, or runs away from those that will not receive all his Supernumeraries. Usurpation is the peace breaker in the Church of God. Christs sheep know his voice and follow him; but they will not be so obedient to an unknown voice. Why cannot a man be content to be a Lord Bishop, and to have many hundred or thousand pound a year, for promoting the preaching and practice of Christianity, and for punishing Hereticks, rebels, drunkards, sensualists, &c. and serve God himself with what garb, or forms, or ceremonies he please, as well as to have the same wealth and honour, to prosecute much wiser and better men than himself, with a burning zeal, for not swearing obedience to him, or for not subscribing that his Books are faultless, or for not wearing a Surplice, or signing Children with the transient Image of the Cross.

But we must suppose that we cannot make *Papists* to be *Protestants*; If they will not turn *Protestants*, and we will not turn *Papists*, the contrivance or supposition of a turn, or half-turn, is but a vain imagination, not the way to unity and peace. We must take them as they are, and they must take us as we are, and we must take all the Christian Churches as they are, in our design for concord, if we will do any good in it. The question is not how, or how far we shall change one anothers minds, or be changed, but how we shall maintain so much love and peace as is due to one another in the capacity that we are in; and how far we shall endure the different opinions and practices of another to such an end. And such a Conciliator with Rome I would be my self, and magnifie the design as much as *Heylin* doth, and be as zealous in it as *Grotius*, *Laud* or *Forbes* were in theirs. For it is but the service of Love and Peace, and that is certainly the service of God. I would treat with any *Papists* on such a design. If peevish or suspicious Protestants should cry out on me, and defame me for such a design; (as some have done) I would no more regard it than the crying of a child. If
Christian

Christian Princes would make such a Treaty their business by their Ambassadors, that *Love and Liberty* might be regulated by the just rules of *Equality*, and not be pretended only by a faction for their own ends, even by them that will *seek Liberty* but will not give it, I would bleis God for such Princes, and for so good a work. And I would be (and am) ready to manifest to all wise impartial men, whose Religion is *Love* and not *Malice* under the name of *Zeal*, that in many Doctrines that we are by some supposed to differ in Fundamentals, ignorance hath feigned the difference to be doubly greater than it is. And I think many of *Forbes* and *Spalato's* Arguments (in his very Learned Books *de Republ. Eccles.*) to be worthy the serious study of every Learned man. I know *Luther* took the Doctrine of uncertainty of Salvation alone, to be cause enough of our unreconcilableness with *Rome*; and yet I know as well, that it is not one godly person of many, yea very many of them that are farthest from the *Papists*, who do say that they are certain of their own Salvation. I know that many excellent Protestants have made it the sense of that article of the Creed, *I believe that my own sins are pardoned*, and say that this Proposition, *My sins are pardoned*, is *de fide Divina*. And yet I know that in propriety and strictness of speech (which should be used in Controversies) it is not true. I know that many of the School-mens assertions are commonly rejected as erroneous, because they are not commonly understood. I know that *Luther* maketh the Doctrine of Justification to be *Articulus stantis vel cadentis Ecclesie*; and yet I know that *Ludovicus le Blank* of Sedan in his *Theses* hath greatly narrowed the difference, and understands it much better than *Luther* seemeth to have done. Which I may say also of *Bucer*, *Conradus Bergius*, (*In Praxi Cathol.*) *Ludov. Crocius*, and many other such Conciliators. And that *Luther* on the *Galatians* is so acceptable to the *Antinomians*, that I conceive divers passages in it have need of as candid an *exposition* as the Doctrine of *Scotus*, and many *Papists* on that point. I am myself a *Christian*, and that is my Religion; and I own the name *Protestant* for no greater reason, than because it is the Protestant Religion to be *meer Christians*, and to protest against the *Roman* Superadditions, and depravations of it. And so to be a Protestant, and to be a meer Christian adhering to Scripture sufficiency as the test and terms of Union and Communion, are all one. Yea, if any one doubted of the Canonicalness of the *Canticles*, *Esther*, or some one or few Books, and acknowledg the main body of the Scriptures

and the ancient articles of faith I would not cast such a one from my Communion. And these terms or none (I have foretold it you oft) must heal the Church if ever it be healed.

And till the *Papists* will see the equity of these terms, it is our great advantage that the certain truth of all our Religion is so fully acknowledged.

BUT, 2. as long as we let others alone with their additions, why may they not live in peace with us, and let us alone without them? All men are *united* in the Essentials of Humanity, though they are not all of one complexion, stature or degree of strength. And if any be so peevish that he will associate with none that are not of his own complexion, the separation is the effect of his folly, which may possibly be cured; and till it be cured, both the fault and the suffering is his own. If a Law were made that none shall live in the Kings Dominions but men of a Sanguine complexion, and of a strait and comely person, and of such a proportion of tallness and of strength, and of flaxen hair, this Law would necessitate a separation and diminution of the Kings subjects from generation to generation. But if the Law be that all *English* men that will live after the rules of *Reason, Honesty, and Society*, shall have the privileges of subjects, if an hundred thousand had got a conceit that they may not lawfully be of the same Kingdom with any but men of their own complexion and stature as aforesaid, this is a curable folly; and the Law-makers may say, we have done our parts for *universal society*, and it is not we that make it impossible, or hinder it, and men in time may come to reason. We refuse not them, but they refuse us. If you make *things necessary*, and of common agreement to be your terms of *Union, Greeks, Abassines, Armenians, Romans*, may take their own way, and every one without injury enjoy his own (be it wisdom or folly) upon these terms. But if you unite upon any other terms, you make Laws for schism, even for the exclusion of all that are not of your mind. For *Hales* his Doctrine is true in the judgment of all men save the guilty, that the *Imposer of unnecessary doubtful things* is the Schismatick, or cause of all the schism. So that there is no true union to be expected with *Rome* or any others, but on the terms of primitive simplicity, or which all true Christians are agreed in. And they are no good terms which induce the authors through the force of interest, to say that none in the world are good Christians, that are not of their cut and strain, and wear not their livery, and lace not their coats in the Imposers mode.

4 And as long as we take nothing from the men of various modes and fashions, by unity in the Essentials of Humanity and Christianity, to imagine that it is the way to union to force all Dissenters to their modes, is but to renounce union, and to gratify a distant party so far as to make them laugh at us as fools, and hope ere long to get us at their mercy, and thereby to lose, disoblige and destroy those that are nearer to us, and would indeed be our friends and strength; and to become enemies to our own families, rather than to displease the people of *France* by not wearing their fashions.

5. And if you had attained a seeming union with the *Papists*, you are not sure it will hold seven year. For their Religion still thriveth, and thereby changeth, and is yet far short of its maturity in all likelihood. For General Councils make their Religion; and who knoweth how many General Councils (of forty Bishops perhaps like that at *Trent*, for a great part of the time) there may yet be, and what alterations of Religion they may make? And are you sure you can go along with them in all as far as they will go? If you must break at last, unite not on such mutable terms at first.

But there's no talking to men whose *interest* and *passion*, and *partiality* is the maker of their Religion. It is not my purpose to speak any of this, either to one of *Grotius's* mind (if *Saraviad*, and the Book called *Grotius Papirans* be credible, or if he be that man that wrote the *Discussio Apolog. Rivet*; who would have us unite upon the acceptance of all the Councils even that of *Trent*) nor to such as come as near them as Mr. *Thorndike*, nor any of that degree of affinity. For I suppose they are already gone out of the hearing of such a voice as mine.

Yet still remember that I am not setting a Law, (no not Christs Law) to your selves for the rule of your own opinions or practices. If you will please the *Papists* by coming yet nearer them (even nearer than the learned *Forbes* Bishop of *Edenburgh* did), if you will have more of their Doctrine, Discipline and Worship, take it if it will do you any good? But why must all others needs be of your judgment? or those be of your way that are not of your judgment? And why cannot you unite with the *Papists* (if you will), without destroying the Protestants, or renouncing them. Unite in things necessary, and hold and use the rest as matters of liberty, and it will better attain your just ends than violence can do.

Obj.

Obj. 25. But if we should abate you any thing, though but a ceremony, or a Subscription, or Oath, or should make any alteration in the Church-Government, (though it were but to take the Church keys from Lay Chancellors), or if we should reform Discipline, or any thing at your desires, you will be taken by the people to be their deliverers and reformers, and your cause will be taken to be good when we yield to it in any part, and it will be said that you did not dissent from us, and make all this ado in vain; and we shall be thought to have been in the wrong, and all this while opposed Reformation. Or (as the young Eccel Politician speaketh, pag. 258) This would but give the countenance of authority to their scruples and superstitious pretences, and leave the Church of England under all those calumnies to posterity, with which themselves, or their followers labour to charge it; and oblige future ages to admire and celebrate these peevish and seditious persons, as the founders of a more godly and through Reformation.

Ans. 1. It is the nature of all sin to blind the mind, and engage the affections to it, that the more men have of it, the less they may either see or hate it. And so it is with Faction, Schism, and selfishness, which is the root of all (as the case of the Roman Clergy witnesseth.) And if any besides your selves had reported you to speak such words, which are the full significants of these vices, (*selfishness, faction and schism*), I should have judged him uncharitable. Alas! that ever men that call themselves Ministers of Christ, and Pastors of his flocks, should and would be thought to be the wisest and worthiest of his Ministers in comparison of whom we are worthy to be silenced, banished and ruined, should yet dare before God and man to vent and own the language of pride and faction, and envy, while they cry out against pride, and faction, and envy! But they that think they know something, know nothing as they ought to know! The Lord teach me to become a fool, and escape their wisdom, that I may be wise; and to know my self better than such men do, before I pretend to know the folly, and hypocrisie, and unworthiness of men that are wiser, and more sincere and worthy than my self. What little need had you to disgrace your selves by telling the world that you will not amend, lest you be thought to have done amiss, and lest those that
desired

desired it be celebrated as the founders of a godly Reformation ! Hath not *self-seeking* and *siding* done enough against us yet, but you must keep up the distinction of *Parties* and their *Merits* for your own reputation against them whose desire is to have unity settled upon terms of common agreement, that there may be no more names or signs of faction among us ?

Thus is the Church (or Kingdom rather) of *Rome* kept from Reformation, lest they should part with the honour of their *Infallibility*, and seem to confess that they needed Reformation.

2. But it is a gross mistake to think that this course will keep up your honour to posterity, or hinder the estimation of them who desire you to amend. For when you and we are in the dust, the world will not be afraid of you, nor silence truth lest they incur the danger of your frowns ; but will freely tread upon your *Hicjaces*, and cast up your bones to make room for others, and talk of you and your acts as freely, as King *Henry* the Eighth, Queen *Mary*, Bishop *Bonner*, and *Gardiner* are now talkt of. And there will such men survive us, as will take it for a greater fault and shame to have sinned impenitently than to have repented ; and to have refused amendment, when peace and common interest required it, and so many arguments were used for it ; yea, and to have so afflicted their brethren that desired and sought it of them, than to have been guilty of the mutability and weakness of amending, or of being more for love and unity, and peace.

3. But if that be the matter, men of half your pretended wisdom, might easily know how to heal the Church, and yet to save your honour too, yea and to deny the feared honour of the Dissenters, so far as such as you can hinder it. And if you will not interpret it as an *approving* of your act, I will tell you how : Cannot you abate the Subscriptions, Oaths, and other such *Impositions*, and tell the world, that you do it not as convinced by the *Nonconformists* arguments, nor as supposing that the things have any evil in them, but only out of your eminent charity, as bearing with the weak, and your love of the Churches peace and concord, more than the dissenters love them ? Nay you may rail at the *Nonconformists* in your very Concessions, and call them as bad as you do in your writings, so you will but yield to *healing terms* ; and do it not as a *Reformation*, but as a peaceable forbearance of these Schismatical, peevish, disobedient Reformers, that they may have no more pretence for Schism.

4. Did *Peter Heylin*, or Archbishop *Land* and his adherents, if *Heylin* belie him not, deal with the *Papists* on such terms as these? Did they say, They will justify their Invasion 88, and their Powder-Plot, and all their Treasonable Practises, and Bulls, and all their false Doctrines for which these were done, if we abate them any thing, or yield them the least; and therefore we will yield them nothing at all? Did *Grotius*, did your Bishop *Forbes*, doth your Mr. *Herbert Thorndike* go upon such terms with them, or not? Speak out, Do you think us or the *Papists* nearer to you? If *they* are nearer you than *we* are, then *you* are nearer *them* than us; Even *than us* who subscribe to all the faith of the Church of *England*, and differ, as you say, but in indifferent things: Than us whose Writings declare our judgments to the world. But if you be really nearer to *us*, than to the *Papists*, why may you not yield as far to us, for peace and concord, as the Episcopal Reconcilers would have done to them? Even Dr. R. *Cox* would have yielded to Church-Images, *Vid. Epist. ad Cassand.*

5. Lastly, O that you would remember, that he that *denieth not himself*, cannot be Christs disciple. And that you would never tempt the world to think, that we should all have peace, if there were none that were cast down, because *Abel* offereth a more accepted sacrifice than their own; yea or if there were none that made it the chief point of difference, whether we should be *seriously*, or only *seemingly* Christians, and live as men, that believe indeed that there is a life to come, and that the Scripture is true.

I hope I may recite Dr. *Hammonds* Paraphrase on *Act. 4. 9. 14. 18, 21.* If we this day be examined of an action, which is so far from being a crime, that it is a special act of mercy (as Preaching the Gospel is)——Though they were as maliciously and petulantly affected toward them (v. 16.) as was possible, yet had they nothing to object, or except against the whole action.——But *Peter* and *John* made light of their interdict or terrours, and told them plainly that they were commanded by God to preach; and that in all reason, God must be obeyed before them, or the greatest Magistrate on earth, and that they themselves could not but confess so much.——And so not knowing what else to say to them, being not able to deny the force of their argument (they wanted our new wits), they added more threatnings, if possibly they might terrifie them, and so dismissed them, having nothing to lay to their charge.

And if Mr. *Middlesty* in *Lancashire* had brought out the many thousand people converted by him, which Dr. *Ames* mentioneth, had it not been a silencing argument against his silencer, as well as the Cure of a lame man here was ?

And on 1 *Thess* 2. 15, 16. *It being unreasonable that they which have cast off obedience to God, should persecute all men that come to tell them of their duty. And this generally is the ground of their quarrel to us, that in spite of their prohibition we preach to the Gentiles, use means that they might repent of their Idolatries, &c. By which and the former things, the Jews do so fill up the measure of their sins, that the wrath of God, to the utter destruction of them, is now come out upon them, already denounced ; and within a very little while, most certain to overtake them.*

I apply it no further than to tell you, that if you will still chuse our *Suffering*, as more desirable than our *Preaching* the Gospel of Christ : your arms will sooner be tired with striking, than faithful Ministers will be tired with *Sufferings* ; and you will be sooner a weary of smiting with the Sword, than they will be with preaching the Word, under all your pressures. And when your nets have taken only the Greater fishes, the lesser fry will all get through, and become more numerous, and in time as Great as those you took, and will make the vanity of your trade apparent, and make you one day wish that you had left such nets, and with Peter and them, have been fishers of men, to win them, rather than to destroy them.

26 Obj. But *Castellanus* his objection against *Bicot* (elsewhere cited out of *Scaliger*) is their greatest strength, who said *Aristotle* was against *Monarchy* : Here they may borrow that by deceiving, which by disputing they could not prove : The *Counterminors*, and many others like minded endeavour to make Rulers and people believe, that it is *Rebellion* that is in our hearts, and that it is only the renouncing of a *Rebellious Covenant* that we stick at, and the Renouncing of Subjects taking arms against the King, and any commissioned by him ; and therefore the silencing of such as cherish the principles of *Rebellion* is necessary : And they think that this Oven gapeth so wide, and is so hot, that here they may boldly challenge our answer.

Ans. If men have any remnants of justice and modesty left, they shall be constrained to confess, that my Answer to this Objection is satisfactory.

I. I take that man to be an enemy to God, to Kings, and to Mankind, who will maintain that there is any such thing in the world, as a lawful unlimited Monarchy or humane Power; and therefore wonder that Bishop *Morley* did put the denial of this among the accused passages of my *Political Aphorisms*, where I expressly speak of *Gods Limitation*.

1. He is an enemy to God that asserteth this, because he thereby denieth God to be the Universal Sovereign, who hath made Laws for all Kings, who are all his Subjects; and as they are finite, receive but a finite power from him: It is Atheism to deny Gods Sovereignty. Hath not God forbidden Kings Idolatry, Perjury, Blasphemy, Murder, Tyranny, Oppression, Adultery, &c?

2. He is an enemy to Kings who will render them odious to mankind, by drawing such a picture or description of them, as to say, *A King is one that is absolutely unlimited in his power, and therefore may deny or blaspheme God, and may destroy City and Kingdom, and kill all the innocent people when he please.*

3. He is an enemy to Mankind that would bring them into such slavery, under such a Monster, and tell them, *If your King send but a few Commissioned executioners, to command all your Heads, and murder Senate, City and Countrey, Parents and Children, and burn up all your dwellings, neither the Law of Nature, or of the Land will allow you to defend your selves against them. Who will defend such a monster in War against his enemies, when no enemy can bring them into greater slavery?*

II. Almost all mankind on earth agree, that all humane Power is limited, and that Propriety is in order of nature antecedent to regiment, which is to order the use of propriety: Men are born with a propriety in their lives, members and health: And Nature giveth them a propriety in their Children, and Contract in their Wives, and natural Industry in the fruit of their labours: And what am I that I should deny all this, and seem wiser (in Atheism and Inhumanity) than almost all the world?

III. It is a known thing, that Tyranny is the great hinderer of the Preaching of the Gospel, and so of the Conversion and saving of the World. Why is not the saving truth of God preached among Heathens and Mahometans (who are five sixth parts of mankind) and among Papists (who are the fourth part of the other sixth), but because Tyrants will not suffer it? And no friend of God, Christ or man then should set up or plead for such an evil.

IV. To stop the mouth of Malice it self, I here truly adjoyn the profession of my judgment about all this Controversie and Accusation: "I do Assent and Consent to all that is said for the
 "Power of Kings, and the obedience and patience of Subjects, in
 "all the Word of God, in all the Confessions which ever I yet
 "saw of any Christian Church, Reformed Greek or Papist (except what exalteth the Pope, his Councils and Agents) or which
 "is the ordinary Consent of Politicians, Lawyers or Divines, or
 "which is established by the Constitution of this Kingdom. I
 "stand to the Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy. I hold it unlawful for any of his Subjects to take arms against the King, that
 "is, against his Person, Authority, Dignity, Rights or Laws, or
 "against any of his Courts, Officers or Soldiers Lawfully Commissioned by him; yea or if they be unlawfully Commissioned, except when Gods Law of Nature, or the Kings own Law, or
 "contrary Commission bind me to it. And I will never endeavour to alter the Constituted Monarchical Government of this
 "Kingdom; Nor will I endeavour to reform the Church or its
 "Government, by Rebellion, Sedition, or any other unlawful
 "means: And I believe that no other Oath, League or Covenant
 "doth disoblige me from any of this aforesaid, nor warranteth
 "me to disobey any lawful Command of the King, or any of my
 "Governours, nor to do any unlawful thing: And I renounce all
 "Doctrines and Practices contrary to this profession; Especially
 "of those Popes and Councils of Bishops, who have decreed the
 "Excommunicating and Deposing of Kings, or other Temporal
 "Lords, and the Absolving their Subjects from their Oaths and
 "Fidelity, and the rest of the Papal Usurpations and Church-
 "Tyranny, against the Rights of Princes and Christian people,
 "though judged Hereticks by Pope, Prelates or Priests.

If this be not enough, see the *2d Plea for Peace*, and my form
 T 2 of

of *professed Loyalty*, in my book, called, *The true and only way of the Concord of all Christian Churches.*

V. And because they still cant over the mention of the late miserable Wars, as if they hated the Act of Oblivion and Peace; I add, that malice may have no more to say that hath the shew of reason.

Silence and cast out all that ever had any hand in those Wars, (except the Conformists) and no more, and we will give you a thousand thanks, and acquiesce in it as unexpected justice. And is not all this yet enough?

VI. As to the particular reasons that we have against Subscribing [*Universally and unlimitedly, without any exposition given by the Law-makers, that it is unlawful to take arms against any Commissioned by the King, and as referring to [on any pretence whatsoever], it belongeth to another discourse to render them, which giveth the reasons of our Nonconformity: It would be here unseasonable, and they are many and great.*

27 Obj. *But good words must not satisfy, while the remembrance of your Rebellious practises yet remaineth.*

Ans. 1. I have elsewhere told the strangers and young men that know it not, that it was between two Parties of Episcopal Conformists that the War began.

2. Is it not Words that you require as satisfactions in your Subscriptions and Oaths? What more than Words is it that you would have?

3. Are not the Laws in Power, and Judges to execute them against any that shall speak or do disloyally? What would you have more than Words, and that mens Estates and Lives be answerable for their offences?

Obj. *But why will you not then subscribe and swear in the words of the Law, but in your own?*

Ans. To give here the reasons of that, is the unseasonable digression.

digression before disclaimed. You may as well here call us to dispute over all our differences.

Obj. But here I am charged as an impudent falsifier of History, for saying that the War began between two Parties of Episcopal Conformity; which maketh me pity the World in point of History, when the publick affairs of a Kingdom so openly managed shall be in such a manner controverted in the very age when they were done. Divers Lords are yet living who were interested in these matters: and it is unpleasing to give men the Catalogue of great mens Names in a matter which His Majesty hath committed to oblivion: But a breviate of all the necessary proof, I shall draw up in a History by it self.

The Accusation 28, being made publickly by my old friend Dr. *Thomas Good*, in his book, called *Dubitantius & Firmianus*, I will annex a Letter which I wrote in answer to it.

ACCUS.

A C C U S. 28.

*To my Reverend and Worthy Friend, Dr. Thomas Good,
Master of Baliol-Colledge in Oxford.*

Reverend and Worthy Sir,

IT is now about a Month since I received a Letter from you, for the furthering of a good work, which I sent to Mr. *Foley* by his Son Mr. *Paul Foley*, not having opportunity my self to see him. I have stay'd so long for an answer, not hearing yet from him, that I think it not meet any longer to forbear to acquaint you with the reasons of the delay. He liveth quite at the other end of *London* from me, and my weakness and business keep me much within doors, and it's hard to find him within, except at those hours when I am constrained to be in bed. But I have reason to conjecture that his answer will be, 1. That the rich men whose judgments are for Conformity, are far more numerous than those who are of another mind, and therefore fitter to promote that work. And there are so very few that do any thing for the ejected Ministers, that some of them live on brown bread and water, &c. which hindereth those Gentlemen from other kind of charitable work. 2. And I must crave your patience (being confident by your ancient kindness, of your friendly interpretation) which I tell you, that this day I heard one say, We can expect that Dr. *Good* do make his Scholars no better than himself. And what reason have we to maintain and breed up men to use us as he hath done in his late Treatise? I got the Book, and was glad to find much good, and several moderate passages in it, (and I knew you so well as that I could not but expect moderation), but when I perus'd the passages referred to, I could say no more for them, but that I would write to you to hear your answer about them. For I confess they surprized me; though at the same time I received many new Books of a sanguine complexion from other hands without any admiration.

I. The first passage referred to, was pag. 104. *Which are confessedly things indifferent.* This is spoken indefinitely of the *Presbyterians*.
Where

Where have I lived? I know not one *Presbyterian* living that divideth from you for any thing which he confesseth indifferent. I crave your answer containing the proof of this? at least to name some one of them that we may reprove him. We take Conformity to be so far from indifferent, that we forbear to tell the world the greatness of the sin which we think to be in it, lest men cannot bear it, and lest it should disaffect the people to the Ministry of the Conformists.

II. Your p. 156. I pass by. The main matter is p. 160, 161. that though *All the Nonconformists were not in actual arms against the King,*—nor did they all as natural agents cut off his Head; but morally, that is, very sinfully and wickedly they had their hands stained with that royal blood; for whosoever did abet these sons of Belial in their rebellions, treasons, murders of their King and fellow Subjects, either by consenting to their villanies, praying for their prosperity, praising God for their successes, &c.

The Charge is high: If it be not true, 1. They are almost as deeply wrong'd as you can wrong them. 2. Our Rulers are wronged by being so provoked to abhor them, silence and destroy them. 3. Posterity is wronged by a misinforming History.

I. You are too old to be ignorant that it was an Episcopal and *Erastian* Parliament of Conformists that first took up these arms in *England* against the King. The Members yet living profess that at that time they knew but one *Presbyterian* in the House of Commons. Interest forced or led them to call in the *Scots*, and *Presbytery* came in with them. If you doubt of it, see the Propositions to the King at *Nottingham*, where a limited Episcopacy is one.

II. The Lord Lieutenants that seized on the Militia were far most Conformists, and scarce any *Presbyterians* at all.

III. The General Officers and Colonels of the Earl of *Essex's* Army were ten to one Conformists, and few if any *Presbyterians* save a few devious Mercenary *Scots*, if they were such, which I know not; and the General Episcopal himself.

IV. The Major Generals of the Militia in the several Counties were mostly Conformists, and scarce any *Presbyterians*.

V. The Assembly at *Westminster* when they went thither were all Conformists, save about eight or nine, and the *Scots* Commissioners.

V. One of the two *Archbishops* was a General in the *Parliament's* Army.

VI. Many

VI. Many of the present Conformable Ministers were in arms against the King, and some wrote for his death, and many of them took the Covenant and Engagement.

VII. The most of the Conformable Gentry of my acquaintance that were put upon it took the Engagement against the King, and House of Lords.

VIII. The Nonconformable Ministers of *Gloucestershire*, (Mr. *Geery*, Mr. *Capel*, Mr. *Marshall*, &c.) were against the Parliaments War, though the Parliaments Garison was over them. Mr. *Bampfild* (who hath lain six or seven years in the Common Goal for Preaching) (with his brother (sometimes Speaker of the House of Commons) was so much against the Parliaments cause, that to this day (even while he lay in Goal) he most zealously made his followers renounce it. Many Nonconformists in many Counties were of the same mind.

IX. Many of the Nonconformists lived in the Kings quarters, and never were drawn the other way, as Dr. *Conant* (lately one of them) and others in *Oxford*, and so in other parts.

X. Some of the Nonconformists were in the Kings Army. Poor Mr. *Martin* of *Weeden* lost an Arm in his Army, and yet the other arm lay long with him in *Warwick* Goal for Preaching.

XI. Almost all the Nonconformists of my acquaintance in *England*, save *Independents* and *Sectaries*, refused the Engagement, and took *Cromwell* and the Commonwealth Parliament for Usurpers, and never approved what they did, nor ever kept their days of Fasting or Thanksgiving. (To tell you of the *London* Ministers Printed Declarations against the intended death of the King, you will say is unsatisfactory, because too late.)

XII. Most of the Nonconformable Ministers of my acquaintance were either boys at School, or in the University in the Wars, or never meddled with it; so that I must profess, that setting them all together, I do not think that one in ten throughout the Kingdom can be proved to have done any of these things that you name against the King.

XIII. We have oft with great men put it to this trial, Let them give leave but to so many to Preach the Gospel as cannot be proved ever to have had any hand in the Wars against the King, and we will thankfully acquiesce, and bear the silence of the rest; make but this match for us, and we will joyfully give you than's.

XIV. Who

XIV. Who knoweth not that the greatest Prelatists were the masters of the Principles that the War was raised on, *Bilson, Jewel, &c.* (and *Hooker* quite beyond them all.)

XV. But because all proof must be of individuals, I intreat you as to our own Countrey where you were acquainted, tell me if you can, I say it seriously if you can, whatever was done or said against the King, by Mr. *Ambrose Sperry*, Mr. *Kimberlye*, Mr. *Lovell*, Mr. *Cowper*, Mr. *Reignolds*, Mr. *Hickman*, Mr. *Trustram*, Mr. *Baldwin*, Senior, Mr. *Baldwin*, Junior, Mr. *Sergeant*, Mr. *Waldern* (dead), Mr. *Joseph Baker* (dead), Mr. *Wilsby*, Mr. *Brian*, Mr. *Stephen Baxter*, Mr. *Badland*, Mr. *Bucher*, Mr. *Eccleshall*, Mr. *Read*, Mr. *Rocke*, Mr. *Fincher* of *Wedgbury*, Mr. *Wills* of *Bremicham*, Mr. *Paston*, &c. I pass by many more. And in *Shropshire* by old Mr. *Samuel Hildersham*, Old Mr. *Samuel Fisher*, Mr. *Talents*, Mr. *Brian* of *Shrewsbury*, Mr. *Barnet*, Mr. *Keeling*, Mr. *Berry*, Mr. *Malden* of *Newport*, Mr. *Thomas Wright* (dead), Mr. *Taylor*, &c. These were your neighbours and mine! I never heard, to my remembrance, of any one of them that had any thing to do with the Wars against the King. It's true. (except Mr. *Fisher* and some few) they were not ejected, but enjoyed their places; And did not *you* as well as they? If I can name you so many of your neighbours that were innocent, will you tell the King and Parliament, and the Papists and Posterity, that *All* the Nonconformists (without any exception) had their hands stained with the Royal blood? What! Mr. *Cook* of *Chester*, and Mr. *Birch*, &c. that were imprisoned and persecuted for the King! What! Mr. *Geery* that dyed at the news of the Kings death! What, Sir *Francis Netherfole* (and Mr. *Bell* his Pastor) who wrote so much against the Parliament, and was their Prisoner at *Kenelworth* Castle almost all the Wars!—What may we expect from others, when Dr. *Good* shall do thus.—

I put not in any excuse for my self among all these. It may be you know not that an Assembly of Divines (twice met) at *Coventry* (of whom two Doctors, and some others are yet living) first sent me into the Army to hazard my life (after *Naseby* fight) against the course which we then first perceived to be designed against the King and Kingdom, nor what I went through then two years in opposing it, and drawing the Soldiers off: Nor how oft I preached against *Cromwell*, the Rump, the Engagement, but specially
 their

* The Earl of their Wars, and Fasts, and Thanksgivings: Nor what I said to *Orrery*, who was present all the while, at both times, that ever I spake to *Cromwell*, which was plainly and faithfully to his displeasure.

† The Lord Chief Justice *Hale* told me he had *Hookers* last books before, and I now have the last printed long before Bishop *Gauden* published them.

London, Feb.
20. 1673.

Your truly loving friend,
and obliged servant,

RICHARD BAXTER.

Note, 1. That this *Dr. Good* was one of the most peaceable, moderate and honest Conformists of my acquaintance; and subscribed our *Worcestershire Agreement* (published) for Concord; and joyned with us in our Association and Meetings at *Kidderminster*, and was the man that drew up the Catalogue of Questions for our Disputations at those Meetings; and never then talkt to us of what he here writeth (in a Book called *Dubitantius & Firmianus*). 2. Mr. *Thomas Foley* (a Nonconformist Gentleman, eminent for Charity (having built near *Stourbridge* a Hospiral, and endowed it with about 500 *l. per annum*) being my friend, *Dr. Good* wrote to me, to move him to give maintenance for two Scholarships in *Balioi-Colledge*; and I wrote this Letter in answer to that, but the sending was delayed till he was dead.

Accus.

Accusf. 29. Another to save the Nation from the labours of a Concordant Ministry, and from the blessings of Unity, Peace and Innocence, hath written a book lately, called *The Modern Pleas for Comprehension, Toleration, &c. considered*; who at his entrance saith, *I would fain have any of our dissenting brethren to answer directly, Whether there be any one thing sinful in her Communion* (the Churches as by Law established), *or only some things (as they conceive) inexpedient.* And p. 11. he saith, *Suppose that the terms of the Communion of the Church, are not only inexpedient, but really sinful; if so, then I shall readily grant that the Church ought not to be communicated with; while the terms of her Communion are such.* But—I shall presume to say with some confidence, that it is not easie to find a considerable man among them, who will not be ashamed to own it publicly, or who doth himself really believe it. And p. 12. *I have been credibly informed (not to say that I am able to make it good) that Mr. Calamy did before his Majesty, and divers Lords of the Council profess, that there was not any thing in the constitution of the Church, to which he could not conform, were it not for the scandalizing of others; so that in his esteem the Constitutions of the Church were in themselves innocent, and the whole objection against them lay in the mistakes of other men.* Yet saith he p. 11. *That the separation from the Church is so avowed and pressed upon the people, as if that it were highly necessary, and that communion with the Church was highly criminal, at least in the opinion of the teachers.*

Ans. And now, Reader, what a shake doth this instance give to the credit of History, at least such as is written by interested factious men? yea what a reproach to humane nature? For what untruth can be imagined so gross! and what thing so nakedly evil, as may not be expected to be found in Man, yea in professed Christians, yea in Divines (of such a character)! Either this man and such others believe what they say themselves, or not! If not, what Preachers, what Christians, what Men are these? If they do, what matter of fact can ever be so notorious, as that we can hope that such men can know it? What History of such Writers can deserve any credit? What regard can the people be

encouraged to give to the Words and Writings of such Doctors, that no better know such publick notorious matters of fact, and so confidently and boldly deceive the world, in cases where so many thousands, yea the Churches Peace and Concord is so much concerned? Reader, judge by these notorious evidences of fact, of these mens credibility and usage.

1. The judgment of the ancient Nonconformists is declared to the world by abundance of Writings, in which they thought that they proved much in the English Constitutions to be *sinful*, and such as men must suffer deprivation and death, rather than consent to. And are all these Writings no evidence of their judgments? nor their sufferings neither?

2. Since his Majesties Restoration, the present Nonconformists still distinguished, 1. Between Diocesan or National Churches, and Parish-Churches. 2. Between the Communion and Conformity of private men, and of Ministers: And 3. Between *Approbation* of the Church-Constitutions, *Practising* all imposed and *peaceable behaviour and submission*: And though some exasperated persons have by the late sufferings of conscionable men, been tempted to separate from the Prelates and their party, as far as *St. Martin* did from the Bishops about him, and their Synods; yet the main body of the Nonconforming Ministers, as far as ever we could learn, did judge as followeth. 1. That those Parish-Churches which had true Ministers (not utterly incapable persons) were true Churches of Christ. 2. That the ordinary Liturgy, appointed for the publick worship, was such as a good Christian may lawfully joyn in (not speaking of Baptizings, Burials, &c. in which some things they thought more dubious). 3. That though *combined Churches*, whether you call them *Diocesan* or *National*, are not any otherwise a Divine Institution, than as *Concord* is commanded us in general, and may not be set up to the detriment of the particular Churches, which are of Divine Institution; yet a good Christian may and must live peaceably and submissively, where some such combined Churches are guilty of Usurpation and sinful abuse. 4. That Conformity to all the Subscriptions, Declarations, Oaths, Covenants and Practices now imposed on Ministers, would be to us a very great and heinous sin, (modesty forbidding us to meddle uncalled with the Consciences of the Conformists).

3. Their judgment of the sinfulness of Ministerial Conformity, they declared to his Majesty and the Bishops in many Writings, when they had encouragement to attempt once the healing of the divisions: And when, because they agreed to leave out all harsh provoking words, in their accusations of the Church-Orders and Ceremonies, the Lord Chancellor had put into the first draught of a Declaration, *That we do not in our judgments believe the practice of those particular Ceremonies, which we except against, to be in it self unlawful.* In our next Address we desired that those words might be expunged, and so they were. Yet this extended not to Subscriptions, Oaths, &c. And afterward many particulars were mentioned which we thought sinful, and the supposition vindicated in a Reply; to which the Bishops never answered. And in a long Petition for Peace, p. 6. we make this Protestation following: *Who can pretend to be better acquainted with their hearts than they are themselves? For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of a man which is in him? And they are ready to appeal to the dreadful God, the searcher of hearts, and the hater of hypocrisy; that if it were not for fear of sinning against him, and wounding their consciences, and hazarding and hindering their salvations, they would readily obey you in all these things; That it is their fear of sin and damnation that is their impediment, they are ready to give you all the assurance that man can give, by the solemnest professions, or by Oath, if justly called to it. And one would think that a little charity might suffice to enable you to believe them, when their non-compliance brings them under suffering, and their compliance is the visible way to favour, safety and prosperity in the world: And if men that thus appeal to God, concerning the intention of their own hearts, cannot be believed, even when the state of their worldly interest bears witness to their professions, but another shall step into the throne of the heart-searching God, and say, It is not as they say, or swear: It is not conscience, but obstinacy or singularity: All humane converse upon these terms will be overthrown: And what remedy have they but patiently to wait, till God whom they have appealed to, shall decide the doubt, and shew who were the assertors of truth or falsehood. And p. 19. They are not Indifferent in the judgment of dissenters, though they be so in yours. And p. 13. And if it be said that men do willingly keep out the Light; we must say, that few men are obstinate against the opinions which tend to their ease and advancement in the world, and to save them from being vi-*
lified

lified as Schismaticks, and undone: And when they profess before the Lord, that they do impartially study and pray for knowledge, and would gladly know the will of God at the dearest rate: we must again say, that those men must prove that they know the dissenters hearts better than they are known to themselves, that expect to be believed by charitable Christians, when they charge them with wilful ignorance, or obstinate resisting of the truth.

This was then the profession which the Nonconformists consented to, no man of them once contradicting it: and Mr. Calamy (here accused) among the first.

4. After this in their debates with the Bishops at the Savoy, they undertook to prove the sinfulness of several things then imposed: And when Bishop Cousins, then in the Chair, gave them in a writing, desiring them to distinguish sins from inconveniences, and to debate only that which they accounted flat sin; they gave him in eight particulars, reserving liberty to add the rest; and one of them was, *That it is sinful for a Minister of Christ to exclude or reject from the Churches Communion in the Sacrament, persons Godly, and otherwise duly qualified, merely because that (fearing it, though causelessly to be a sin) they dare not receive the Sacrament kneeling.* This they earnestly desired to have begun with, and dispute at large, and offered to have then given in their arguments, and then to have proceeded to the other seven particulars.

5. The Kings Declaration about Ecclesiastical affairs, had a little before given them a relaxation or indulgence as to those things which they accounted the greatest sins; such as in the Declaration may yet be seen; especially the Subscription, that *there is nothing in all the books there mentioned contrary to the word of God, &c.* And it did not concern us, or become us, to talk at the the Savoy against the sinfulness of those particulars which his Majesty had in Clemency, and as a healer, so lately freed us from: But why were they in the Declaration suspended (as for our Concord), if they had not been judged to be unlawful by the dissenters, when we ever professed that in all lawful things we would obey?

6. But yet the part of our Answer is, that at that time the new Subscription and Declaration since imposed, and the alterations in the Liturgy, and the Corporation and Oxford Oath, &c. were not invented, or in being, and so we had never opportunity
and

and leave to declare our judgment and reasons of the sinfulness of the new Conformity, which to us was the heaviest part.

7. But surely our Nonconformity on terms so hard, declared it sufficiently to all reasonable men. If 1800 Ministers (none of them cast out as accused of any other crime) should have ceased the work of their office, and occasioned divisions in the Land, and have cast themselves and families into so many years distress and poverty; and all this for to avoid that which they took to be no sin; they had not deserved the name of Christs Ministers, of Christians, or of men.

8. Lastly, Those Writings which any of the Nonconformists have since ventured to publish for their cause, have all of them downright endeavoured to prove that Conformity is a sin; Let Mr. *Cawdrey's*, Mr. *Hickman's*, Dr. *Collins's*, or any of all the rest be perused; and this will be found the scope of the books. Yea he that they judged moderate in these matters, in his book called, *Sacrilegious Desertion of the holy Ministry rebuked*, saith, "O be not too angry with those that censure you as sinners—
"God hateth sin, and so must all that truly love him: And they
"are our best friends that do most to preserve us from it; and
"they are our greatest enemies that would flatter us into it. To
"preach against sin is your Ministerial office: And if any man
"think that you make a solemn Covenant to sin, that you may
"have leave to preach against it, yea that you deliberately com-
"mit a greater one, that you may have leave to preach against
"a lesser in other men; this man deserveth to be heard, though
"he mistake. If we say nothing to you, yet it is easie to gather by
"the costly terms on which we avoid it, that we take Confor-
"mity to be a sin.—I must tell you, that we cannot but think
"that you need repentance, great repentance, for sinning more
" (and that by publick, deliberate, chosen, covenanted, ministerial
"sin, protesting against repentance) in the day when judgments
"called us all to renew our repentance for our former sins.—We
"beseech you be not too angry with us for differencing between
"good and evil, between him that sweareth, and him that fear-
"eth an Oath, as long as we do it to the loss and suffering of
"our own flesh, which disputeth in us more cunningly and strong-
"ly for Conformity, than all the *Durells*, the *Fullwoods*, the
"*Stilemans*, &c. in *England*. We have naturally no more love to
"poverty, to scorn, to a prison, than you have,—It is not plea-
"sure,

“sure, profit or worldly preferment that we contend for: we
 “would do no man hurt or wrong: If our lovers of Church-
 “power do think us intollerable, because we obey them not as
 “fully as they desire; we profess before God and Man, that it is
 “not because we would not be subject and obedient to any, as far
 “as will stand with our obedience to God; but only because we
 “dare not; we will not do that which we believe that God for-
 “biddeth us: And if we err, it is not for want of studying, per-
 “haps as hard and impartially as they, to know the truth.—It
 “is *sin*, and no *small* or *tolerable sin*, which our consciences fear, in
 “our forbearing Subscriptions and Conformity.—*Ch. 12.*

And now, Reader, Pity, pity, pity, the Ministry, the Church
 the World, that have such men, such usage, such historical infor-
 mers as these, that can, that dare thus publickly and confidently
 face down the ignorant, that we take not Ministerial Confor-
 mity and Communion with them to be sin: And never wonder at
 it if the same men should as confidently print, that we are all pro-
 fess *Mahometans*.

And as to his report of Mr. Calamy's words before the King,
 we must testifie some of us, that we were from first to last in his
 company at such meetings, where those matters were transacted,
 and at all the meetings before his Majesty that we heard he was
 present at, and we over and over have heard him profess that he
 took several things in Conformity to be intollerable sins, but never
 heard a word from him to the contrary: And he may be judged
 of by the Preface to our Reply, which he wrote; and by his not
 only refusing a Bishoprick, but by his Sufferings, and constant pro-
 fession to his death.

This Writer, to save the Church from Concord, by restoring the
 silenced Ministers, feigneth *Comprehension* to be a late device, a thing
unknown, or that amounts to no more than a pretty artifice of saving
 the reputation of about a dozen persons, who are sick of their sepa-
 ration, and stand in need of a plausible pretence, under which to re-
 turn unto it. Their credit will not suffer them to renounce their old
 principles, and they are weary of sticking longer to them. Now if
 the pride of these men should be thus far gratified, &c.

Ans. 1. See how boldly this man pretendeth to search the hearts
 of others. *2.* How he feigneth that to be *New*, which they so
 laboured for 1660, and ever since: Read but their Petition for

Peace and Judg. 3. Doth he not take it to be more for our Reputation to conform, and to be dignified and preferred, than to live under the scorn and sufferings that we do? Do not Bishop *Reignolds*, and many others that conform, live in more reputation in the world, than we that are thus reviled by so many Doctors of the Church, and sometimes lie in the common Jayls, and are fain to stoop to be beholden for our bread or necessary maintenance? 4. Who are those dozen men? and why doth he not name them, and prove his charge? Are they not men of strange facinating power, that could make 1800 such Ministers (distant in all Counties) to deny Conformity? And are they not strange persons that will (all over the Land) give over preaching, or live in poverty and suffering (some have dyed through the effects of want), and all to gratifie a dozen men (no one knoweth who)? (And it's like some that he meaneth in his dozen, have done more to displease many of the rest than others). 5. What Nonconformist hath not groaned for our divisions, and been indeed weary of them from the first day, and longed for our common Concord? but that is not to be weary of their principles. O that he would procure us but *liberty to preach the Gospel*, for all the rest that earnestly desire agreement, and shut out the dozen that he meaneth, whoever they be. But pardon me for saying, that these men do satisfie us, that *Sadduces* are blind, who believe that there is no Devil, when so much of him appeareth actively in the World.

But our difference is not in Government and Ceremony only, but in *Doctrines* of Grand importance in Morality: For he saith, pag. 66. *For unless it (the Covenant) be lawful in every particular respect, no body can be obliged by it.* O dreadful Doctrine, to come from a Doctor of a Christian Church! That a *Covenant and Vow to God* can oblige no body, unless it be lawful in every respect: If so, Protestants that hold that imperfect man hath no sinless work, and so no Vow or Covenant is in *all respects* lawful, must hold that they are bound by no vow or covenant. If this be so, every erroneous man, or every knave, that hath the ignorance or craft to drop in any one unlawful thing into his Covenants and Vows, is obliged by none of them at all. How easily then may a Papist, or an Atheist shake off all Oaths of Allegiance or Supremacy, by adding one unlawful Particle? It's true, that if some one clause in a Vow were so essential to all the rest as to be their sense; if that were unlawful to be kept, all were so: And as to the *denomination of the frame,*

as consisting of *several parts*, it may be called a *bad* or *unlawful Oath*, if part were so, because *bonum est ex causis integris*, and the sense is; but that it is *unlawful quoad hoc*, or *secundum quid*. But as to *obligation* (though the *Actus imponentis*, and the *Actus jurantis* be unlawful; yet if the *materia juramenti* have ten parts, and *one only* be sin, that doth not nullifie the obligation to the rest: No nor though *nine parts* of it were sin, their neighbourhood nullifieth not the obligation to the tenth.

But what wonder if Conformity by Oaths, Subscriptions, Declarations and Covenants seem lawful to Doctors of such principles as these? What if a *Popish Prince* or *People*, put an unlawful clause into their Covenants? Are they therefore wholly disobliged as to each other? The same I say of Covenants of Peace between several Princes? And of Covenants between husband and wife; and so of other Contracts; but especially of Vows to God. But what if *Perjury* prove a greater sin, than *not conforming to it*? yea a sin meet for none but utterly debauched Consciences, and such as threatneth dreadful ruine? And what if such principles and practices would make us guilty of the Perjury and impenitence of many hundred thousand persons? Should we be drawn into such a guilt by such words as these, and that in a time when God by his Judgments is searching after, and finding out the Nations sins? God forbid.

Another since called, *A Reproof to the Rehearsal Transposed*, p. 457, 458. saith; Do you at all know what were the abatements they demanded to bring them off with Conscience? To let you see your confidence, I tell you they demanded none at all; but the question being solemnly put to them (and that as I am told) in his Majesties presence, Whether they knew of any thing in the Liturgy which they could not comply without sin? they all declared their own satisfaction, but only desired some abatements for the ease of weak brethren; or rather as you tell us bluntly, to bring themselves off with some little reputation.

Ans. O patient God! Alas for strangers, and the Generations to come that must read such history! Alas for the Souls and Churches that have such Guides! Alas that he whose Character is to be the old *Lyer* and *Murderer*, can do so much in the Churches at once to destroy Love and Souls, to make odious Gods Ministers, and to render it so difficult to believe Church-History! If this man had thus published, that we were not English-men, or that we did

at that same time the horrid'st Villanies that he could devise, what other answer could we make than that which these words must have? It is a forgery against such notorious evidence, that I will not undertake for the man that dare print this, but that he may say any thing that can be devised, how false soever.

I have told you, 1. That we gave them in writing an account of what we thought sinful. 2. That we in dispute maintained it. 3. That to that very question we after gave in a paper of eight particulars in the Liturgy, which we undertook to prove flat sin. 4. That we published that profession in our Petition for Peace. 5. That this was before the worse new Conformity. 6. And had it been otherwise, what were our thoughts to 2000 men that were absent?

I must profess I (that was still with them) cannot imagine whence this inhumane fiction could arise, unless it were from these words of my own, which others seconded. When we spake for common Concord, we told them, that *[the question now was not what would satisfy us few men, but what was necessary to the common union? And I added, That I never scrupled E. g. kneeling at the receiving of the Lords Supper; but better men than I did scruple it, and I undertook to prove it a great sin to cast them out of Christian, Sacramental Communion for that cause.]* I verily believe that the horrid forgery had no better colour of proof than these words.

Accus. 30. *Of mens injurious imputing to us the errors and faults of all the Sectaries.*

The course that some Writers (that should have modesty and justice) take to defame us is, to jumble all sects (besides their own) together under the name of *Nonconformists*, and then to rake up the unwarrantable expressions of men of several parties, as the *Nonconformists* Doctrine; and so whatever they find written by an *Antinomian*, a *Separatist*, an *Anabaptist*, (and why not a *Papist* or a *Quaker* too) they lay at the *Nonconformists* doors. When 1. all men of reason know, that though affirmative titles use to signifie some union, so do not negatives. To call a man a *Papist* or a *Protestant*, signifieth somewhat in which he agreeth with others. But to be *no Papists*, or *no Protestants*, agreeth to all other parties in the world.

2. And if before Conformity was required (and so there were no *Conformists*) the several *Sects* were aliens to each others, surely they are so after, or else you may know who is the cause.

3. And why do the *Papists* (and such *Arminians* as *Episcopius*) who are *Nonconformists*, claim kindred and kindness to and from the *Conformists*, rather than the *Nonconformists*, if they know not to whom they are best affected ?

4. Did not the Heathens do thus also by the ancient Christians, when *Sects* swarmed among them, and deride and accuse them for their divisions ? And did not the *Papists* so by the Reformers ? yea, and do to this day ? What more common with them, than to say, All these *Sects* swarm out from you ? And so did the persecutors of the old *Waldenses*, when the *Manichees* were among them.

5. If *Nonconformity* cause all these *Sects*, then they are the causes of them that cause *Nonconformity*. And if you will call in your Impositions, there will be no *Nonconformists*. Let impartial sober reason judg who it is that causeth all these *Sects*. If all the Decrees of General Councils were imposed on all men to be subscribed, would not thousands be *Nonconformists* that are now conformable ? Who cry out against *Sects* so much as the *Papists* ? and yet who in all the world more cause them, even by the manifold *Laws* by which they pretend to cure them ? If only a peaceable communion with the Church had been required, instead of all the Covenants, Oaths, Declarations, and Subscriptions, how many thousand fewer *Nonconformists* had there been ? If any should impose Oaths, Covenants or Subscriptions, against *Episcopacy*, and for *lay-Elders*, would it not make most of the *Conformists* *Nonconformable* ? And what is it that those do who subscribe the same doctrine with you, to make other men heterodox ?

6. Thus were the old *Nonconformists* accused, when they wrote more against *Sects* and Separation than all the high *Conformists* did. And we must say, That if Separatists, *Anabaptists*, *Antinomians*, and such like, had not been more effectually confuted and kept under by the *Nonconformists*, than they have been by the persecutors or sharp opposers of *Nonconformists*, they had been like to have so abounded, as to have carried down most of the zealously religious sort in the stream. Let posterity judg by the Writings of *Hilder sham*, *Paget*, *Gifford*, *Bradshaw*, *Ball*, *Rathband*, and many more such, against Separation ; and by many of the present *Nonconformists*,

conformists, against *Antinomianism*, *Anabaptistry*, *Popery*, &c. who have done most against these Sects. If men that would draw birds to their nets, by throwing stones, or hooting at them, or that would beat the water to make the fish bite at their hooks, or that will still spur-gall their horses to keep them quiet; will revile those that have more skill, as the causes of their unsuccessfulness, because they do not as they do; such men must at last be taught by experience, if ever they will learn. For our parts, we cannot be of their minds.

Accus. 31. *Of some printed Accusations of us as Covetous, and other such like.*

But it hath pleased some late Writers (of great account with some) to lay such matters to our charge as the cause of our nonconformity, as one would have thought should never have entred into the thoughts of a sober man that ever saw or heard of the *English* affairs, and present State.

1. The year 1674. was published a Book under the name of Dr. *Asheton* Chaplain to the Duke of *Ormond*, who in his introduction supposeth the Nonconforming people to be such as meerly believing the Ministers, and the Ministers to be such lest they scandalize the people that think the things unlawful. And so he applieth himself to confute them on that supposition (a thing easily done, if this were all). And he citeth the words of one of us about scandal, against our selves. To which we say, 1. Seeing even *Pagans*, *Papists*, *Socinians* and *Quakers*, *Anabaptists* and *Separatists*, and some *Arminians* and *Prelatists* too, are *Nonconformists* in the largest sense (as refusing Conformity) and seeing it is not imaginable that all the persons of any one profession should be just of the same degree of understanding, and in every thing of the same opinion; it is not impossible but that some one called a *Nonconformist*, may be as brainless and dishonest, as he describeth them. But we must say, that we remember not that ever we met with one of them that was such, and that had no stronger reasons against Conformity, or that took the things avoided to be indifferent. 2. And whether we our selves are such, let our Writings and Reasons therein given against Conformity be the evidence. Could he hope to make

make the world believe, that men not mad with factious humour would live as we live, and suffer what we have suffered, and durst forbear much of the work to which we are devoted, and all to avoid that which we account indifferent, and no sin? And hear then how he doth more than justifie us himself, pag. 30. [*If Conformity be unlawful; if having beg'd Direction from the father of lights in hearty prayer, and having used all moral diligence to satisfy your consciences, you cannot as yet be perswaded of the lawfulness of it: O do not dare for any outward respect whatsoever, to go against the light and checks of conscience? Quod sit contra conscientiam edificat ad gehennam, is a noted truth*]. Ay, but what then must we hear and bear from such as you, when we wonder that any of you can doubt of the unlawfulness of what we refuse?

And coming to our Accusation pag. 71. he thus speaketh (even to our astonishment, that ever humane nature can be tempted into such a state.) *When I have first told them that I shall meet them at the day of Judgment, I can then with greater confidence assure the world (what some mens prejudice will not suffer them to consider) that the chief reasons why so many Nonconformists refuse Subscription, are these two, Their Credit and their Interest, springing from those roots of bitterness, Pride and Covetousness.*

What then may not the mind of man be perswaded to, if a Doctor living in England, in London, can say and believe this, and say it with such an appealing mention of the *day of Judgment*! O who should not fear what his soul may be seduced to think and say?

1. Let it be noted that he speaketh not of any odd or singular persons, nor with distinction, but of the [*so many Nonconformists*].
2. He speaketh of all their hearts and secret intents, even that which moveth them to refuse Subscription.
3. That the thing of which he accuseth them is as odious a crime as most can be charged on man: To disobey the Magistrate, to forsake their flocks, to give over much of their office to which they are devoted, to keep up factions and divisions among the people, and to propagate it to posterity, and protest before God and man that they would conform, but that they are perswaded it is sin (and heinous sin), and all this in hypocrisy, when Pride and Covetousness are the cause, what an odious people are these Nonconformists, if this be true?
4. And Hatred and Prosecution are the proper effects which his accusation tends to. Who can repent of hating and destroying so odious a sort of hypocrites as he describeth?
5. And what

what is the *credit* for which their pride doth seduce them? 1. Consider what is the thing that they look for *credit* in. 2. From *whom* it is. 1. It must be somewhat that hath at least an appearance of *good*, that they can look for *credit* by: Pride liveth not upon *Evil*, as known to be evil. We suppose he meaneth, that it is the reputation of being better Preachers, holier and honefter persons than others, and of more faithful Consciences, who fear lying, perjury, covenanting to sin, and practising more than the Conformists do. 2. And either they expect this reputation with high or low, with many or few. 1. The world knoweth that the Law-makers, and Rulers, and Nobles are for the most part against us; yea that the *Oxford-Act* of Confinement, and others, cast upon us the suspicion of as odious crimes as most are in the world: And the Conformists, who are desirous to make us contemptible, use to perswade the people, that there are few Wise or Learned men among us, but that such are almost all for them; and that it is but a few inconsiderable Mechanick Sectaries who are for us. And if all this be so, what is here left for *Pride* to work upon? How contemptible doth the *Novel Ecclesiastical Politician*, and the *Debate-maker*, among many others render us? And why should not our pride rather incline us to desire the *esteem* and *favour* of the Highest, Richest, and most Honourable, than of mean contemned people, and of the *greater number* than of a *few*? Honour is in the Honourer, and *Laudari a laudatissimis* is the ambition of the proud (of which we were as capable as they, but for these and such other differences of mind and life); and unless we must hear with *Balaam*, [*God hath kept thee from honour*]. But if the people that so honour us, as to feed our Pride (against such depressions as the frowns of some Superiors, the voluminous, Pulpit and private reproaches and derisions of many that should be better employed, and the debasedness of poverty and long prosecutions) be indeed considerable for *number* and *quality*, it seems they see somewhat in those that others abhor and scorn, to make them believe that indeed they are another sort of men, than such would make the world believe they are. And it is to be noted, that the people in question are no strangers to us, either as to our minds, or parts, or practices, being those with whom we converse, and have long conversed; whereas the reproachers, even our Clergy-neighbours, such as this Doctor, are strangers to us, and we to them for ought we know; and though they live near us, converse so little with us,

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that they know us but little (if any whit) more, than men of other Kingdoms (as is fully proved even by their description of our judgments; for we must not think that they knowingly speak falsely).

But his proof of his accusation followeth: *First, their credit and reputation; wherein I am fully instructed by a learned person (Friendly Debate, p. 113.) who having proposed this doubt, Why did many of them deliberate so long whether they should accept of Dignities in the Church? He thus adds, If it was so plain a business that their Conscience and their Covenant would not let them, one would think they should have profest it openly, without any more ado; And therefore I conclude, that pause and deliberation was about somewhat else; not about matter of Conscience, but of Interest and Policy: As whether the people would take it well, and not laugh at them as so many Magpyes, &c. You think perhaps that they spent their time in fasting and seeking God to direct their consciences. No, no: It was not their conscience, but their credit, which then lay at stake—Because I have heard some of them acknowledge, they did not scruple what we do, but thought it unhandsome for them to do it.*

To all this, we have committed the answer to one of the persons to whom one of the mentioned *Dignities* was offered, who answereth as followeth.

1. Is such a charge of mens secret thoughts and intentions well proved, by telling men what one of your selves hath said, with the same spirit and front as *Luther, Calvin, Zuinglius, &c.* are now proved wicked by the *Papists*, because some of their adversaries so reported them heretofore?

2. Are 1800 or 2000 men accusable upon the account of four mens secret thoughts? What is this to all the rest?

3. Is it possible for either of these Authors to know a negative, and that by secret heart-action by four other men, viz. that they *sought not God to direct their consciences.*

4. Would not any other men have thought that *accepting of dignities* had been a likelier sign of *pride*, than refusing them. If either of these Doctors had refused them, we should have thought it a sign of their humility. What a case are we in with such men as these, when we must needs be *proud* whether we *accept* or *refuse*?

5. Would not the favour and honour of those that would have advanced us to *Dignities*, have weighed down the displeasure of those that we should have offended? Do you not think that they
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are more, and more honourable persons, whom our conformity would have pleased ?

6. What scorn or derision does Bishop *Reynolds* now undergo, or many of your Doctors, who some were, and some reputed formerly of our mind ?

7. What scorn would it have been to *Baxter*, who had written two years before the change, for moderate Episcopacy and Liturgies, and whose Books was pleaded and produced at the great meeting at *Worcester-house*, before the King and Lords, and Bishops, and *Nonconformists*, with these words of the now Bishop of *Winchester*, *No man hath written better of these things than Mr. Baxter*. Who answered, That he stood to all that he had there written. And why doth he now suffer so much obloquy and displeasure from the separating part of the *Nonconformists*, if it be reputation that he stuck upon ? Why do your party tell him that he is more calumniated by the *Nonconformists*, than by any others ? Why hath he lost the esteem of so many (as he had once almost done of his own *quondam* flock) for perswading them from going too far in *heart* and *practice* from the Bishops (when it was their silencing Himself and such others that was the thing which turned his old hearers hearts against them).

8. But, judge all men of common Reason, sobriety and honesty of these mens Accusations now by the matter of fact it self, which I opened before as to a former Objection.

Again, Let common *reason* and *equity* here be judge of the *ingenuity* and *credit* of both these Defences: When of *three* men that were offered Bishopricks, but *one* delayed his resolution, and *two* that were offered *Deaneries*; and when the notorious reason was, to see whether the refused Conformity would stand or fall, when no one of them ever talkt of accepting, if that Conformity should stand, and when these were but three men among Eighteen hundred *Nonconformists* that after were cast out (and that *Conformity* was *Actually dispensed with* at the time when *one* refused, *one* accepted, and *three* delayed). Whether this be a good proof that it was not Conscience, but Interest that these men stuck upon ? and that consequently this is the chief reason that 1800 men subscribed not ? And will not posterity rather think that the change may prove sad to the Church of *England*, when instead of so many men that are silenced for avoiding that which they fear to be Perjury, Lying and Covenanting against the Commands of Christ ;

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such men are set up, that dare talk at this rate, and that in Print, and with the mention of *God* and the *day of judgment*. And whereas the *Debate-maker* saith, *That he heard some of them acknowledge that they scruple not what others do*; through *Gods* mercy they are all, save *Mr. Calamy*, yet living, and solemnly profess that they never so thought or said to him, or any other, but have oft openly profess'd the contrary: But if he means any others, what proof is that of these accused persons thoughts?

His second proof runs thus: *If this excellent Author shall be condemned as Apocryphal (and it is a very easie confutation to cry Fie upon him, when they are not able to answer his Arguments, (Alas for the Chureh of England, if her Doctors take such inhumane Calumnies for unanswerable Arguments)! I shall then give them an Authority, formerly little less than Canonical: How the case stands with him at present, I am wholly ignorant: However he is one that fullwell understands the Intrigues of his party. Baxters Def. of the Princip. of Love, p. 92. And here he reciteth the Authors words against that pride and self-interest which we are accused of.*

And here again we appeal to common ingenuity, 1. Whether this man who professeth himself wholly ignorant of the Authors case (and to him is utterly unknown), be liker to know the secrets of his and other mens hearts (it's like as much unknown to him) than he himself, who he saith knoweth the *intrigues of his party*? 2. Whether it be a good proof that Nonconformists are chiefly moved by *Pride*, because they openly write against it, and condemn those that are so moved, with words which the Accuser himself highly approveth?

Obj. *But it seemeth by your words that some such there are among you, and it is not Baxter himself that he accuseth.*

Ans. 1. Yes; for his application followeth [*Ex ore tuo*], which properly should mean that he condemns himself. 2. But suppose it otherwise; Know, Reader, that the person against whom that Book was written, was *Mr. Edward Bagshaw*, an Anabaptist, Fifth Monarchy man, and a Separatist, and a man of an extraordinary vehement spirit, who had been exasperated by many years hard and grievous imprisonment; and that it was such as he that were described; and that the Nonconformists of *England* were so far from being of his mind and spirit, that when *Baxter* had written three Books against him, and such as he, even as *Separatists* (with-

out meddling with him as an Anabaptist, or a Millenary), no one Minister of England wrote in his Defence, nor, that ever his Confuter heard of, pleaded for him. And did we ever dream that no Sectary is moved by Pride to Nonconformity? Do we justify the secret thoughts of all Nonconformists, whom we know not? Or is it a proof that *Pride* chiefly moveth the Nonconformists, because they call out to Sectaries to take heed, lest it be so with them.

3. But because this Doctor hath told the world that *Baxter fullwell understands the intrigues of his party* (as he calls them). Let the world judge whether his testimony then of that party be not more credible than his that so little knoweth them? And he solemnly professeth to the world, that though he hath reason to call the best of men to be very jealous of their hearts, lest pride and self-interest should pervert them; yet he verily believeth, that there is not this day on earth (that he heareth of) a more conscionable, godly, faithful party of Ministers of the Gospel, than those that are now ejected, silenced Nonconformists in England (though they are not all equal in judgment, or Ministerial ability, or self-denial). As far as his credit will go, let posterity believe this: And his testimony shall be believed, when the Defamers and Calumniators shall not.

2. He thus proceedeth, [*A second reason why they conform not, is their Interest*]. "If this be thought a Paradox (it being a strange method to consult their interest, by losing their Livings), the dissatisfied person is desired to consider, that the Ringleaders of the faction having possessed themselves of other mens preferences, and foreseeing that they should be restored to the right owners, thence made a virtue of necessity, by assuring their Profelytes, that they were resolved to stick to them; and as they had defended the Cause with their Tongues and Pens, they were now ready, if Providence call them to it, to seal it with their blood. (And is it a sign of covetousness, to dye for what they hold?) But by this he tells us, that [*the people were melted into such kindness, as that the Preachers are no losers by their silence* (Here's the wonder: Hear the proof.) 1. *Many of them gain more at present from their party, than they could from the Church, if they conformed.*]

Ans. 1. O that he would name those many, and let us try the case? and see also whether they are a considerable number? The

Independents are commonly thought to be best provided for in *London*: But how small is their maintenance to what they had, or might have had heretofore? And why might they not now have more if they could conform? We were just now accused by him and another, about our deliberate refusing of Church-Dignities? And doth he think that we get more now than a Bishoprick or Deanery would have amounted to? And as for what he talks of our being in other mens preferments, we took our Labours indeed for preferment, but not our maintenance; and those that are now *Conformists*, as well as the *Nonconformists*, were formerly in sequestrations; and some were out; and others (where the old sequestred Incumbents were dead) were settled by Law long before the time of silencing. And would not covetousness rather have persuaded them all to conform and take new Livings, than to leave all. Is it possible for an *English* man to think that we live more plentifully upon our Neighbours charity, than the *Conformists* do upon their Dignities, Tythes, and Charity together, even such as live in the houses and favour of the Nobles and great men of the Land? Doth he not here much commend the charity of those that are for the *Nonconformists*, before he is aware, in comparison of others? But the *Reader* shall know the truth of this anon.

But suppose some did gain so much by their *Nonconformity*, would that cause many hundred to continue *Nonconformists*, who live in want, and have no such hopes?

His second proof runs thus, *They retain a power and interest in their party to prefer their conforming sons—And this is such a piece of impiety as (were there not too much ground for the suspicion) I should not think any Christian could be guilty of.*

Ans. And this is such a kind of charge and proof as we think a just and sober Heathen or Mahometan would abhor, and would be as a wonder to us, if the sight and hearing of the like from such men did not tell us what Monstrous pravity hath corrupted the nature of man. And we are sorry that posterity must know by such passages, that the Church of *England* hath such Doctors to succeed the silenced *Nonconformists*, and the houses of the Nobility such Chaplains, whose most deliberate Writings when they appeal to the day of Judgment, are such as may make human nature blush.

1. Of 1800 or 2000 silenced Ministers, we know not of twenty that have sons that are *Conforming Ministers*: suppose there

there should be 40 or 50 such in *England*, would 1750 others be purposely *Nonconformists*, that those 40 or 50 sons of other men might get Livings? What are they to them? or what get they by it?

2. Would it not be a greater prey for covetousness for both Father and Son by conforming to have Livings, than for the Son alone? Yea, for 1800 Ministers to have Livings, than 40 or 50 of their sons alone?

3. And who knoweth not (as they boast themselves) that Nobility and Gentry who have presentations to Church Livings, are so many of them conformable, and distast the *Nonconformists*, as shammeth this accusation? Do not the Parliament and Laws tell us how they are affected? And doth not the prosecution of the *Nonconformists* tell us? Will they that make Laws to eject, silence, confine, imprison, and banish the *Nonconformists*, if they preach, prefer their sons because their fathers are *Nonconformists*? Were not those few sons liker to get Livings, if their fathers got favour by conforming? and if all the rest conformed too? Either he would have men think that the Nobility and Gentry who most like the *Nonconformists*, are many, or but few: if many, there is sure some cause that so many who live with them, and know them, should like them better than the *Conformists*; they take them not to be such as these Doctors do describe them. If but few, is not Preferment rather to be got from many than from few?

Another Book called, *A free and impartial Enquiry into the causes of that very great esteem and honour that the Nonconforming Preachers are generally in with their followers: in a Letter to H. M.* Proceeding from the like spirit, useth the like (but more) Accusations. His first assigned cause is p. 36. *A preaching up of an empty, formal, notional kind of Religion, and causing and encouraging men to build their hopes of heaven upon very easie and pleasing conditions.* And p. 54. *No men have ever given people ground to hope for the salvation of the spirit with less pain, trouble to the flesh, than these men have done.*

Ans. Wonderful! that so many thousands should be so deceived! Make their hearers believe this, and they will soon forsake them. We know no one thing that causeth mens dislike of the *Conformists*.

formists so much, as that they take them to be just such as he describeth the *Nonconformists* to be. We cannot express their opinion of too many of them in apter words. Nor do we know of any thing in the world that causeth men to like the *Nonconformists* so much, as that they judg them to be just contrary to this mans character. And have the people no sense, nor acquaintance with the persons? This is a charge which we meet with few of our enemies that believe. Let these evidences decide the case: 1. Which side hath (generally) the strictest followers? Which side are the generality of the Blasphemers, Whoremongers, Drunkards, and Debauched persons on? And which side hath the most serious, religious sort of persons?

2. Why is it that the *Nonconformists* and their followers are commonly accused for preciseness and overmuch strictness, for being hypocrites, as counterfeiting more holiness and austeriety of life than others?

3. How many of the Ministers were ever cast out for drunkenness, fornication, deceit, swearing, perjury, or any loose living or immorality? Not one of the 1800 that ever we heard of; but all for Nonconformity alone.

4. If you should turn your charge upon the Sectaries, who hath written more against the *Antinomian* loose opinions, than the *Nonconformists* have done? The many Volumes of Mr. *Anthony Burges*, the Writings of Mr. *Richard Allen*, Mr. *Joseph Allen*, Mr. *John Howe*, with many more of late, and of Mr. *Hildersham*, Mr. *Ball*, Mr. *Dod*, Mr. *Greenham*, Mr. *Rogers*, Mr. *Parkins*, and many more such of old, will tell posterity whether the *Nonconformists* preached loose licentious Doctrine.

5. But the fullest decision of this case will be from their *cause* it self. The Liturgy and Canon, 1. obligeth us to refuse no Child that is offered us in baptism. 2. The Rubrick pronounceth the baptized Infants so dying certainly saved (not excepting any child of any Infidel or Atheist, or open denier of a life to come, or derider of Christ and the holy Scripture (of which there are now great store). 3. When the baptized Children can say the words of the Creed, Lords Prayer, &c. though they know not what they say, they are confirmed by the Bishop. 4. Being confirmed, they are to be admitted to the Lords-Supper, though they know not what it meaneth; yea they are compelled for fear of Imprisonment and ruine to communicate. 5. When they are sick, if they

they will but say *they repent*, and desire it, they must be Absolved in *absolute terms*; though they give the Minister no satisfaction, that they are truly penitent, and have lived till then a most ungodly life, and perhaps lie cursing, and swearing, and railing at a holy life on their sick-bed. 6. And being dead, we must pronounce our hope of every one in *England*, except unbaptized ones, excommunicate and self-murderers, that God in mercy hath taken to himself the Soul of this our dear brother out of the miseries of this world; Though they were professed Atheists, Infidels, scorers of Christ, notorious adulterers, or other criminals, and never once so much as said, *I repent*. 7. And the Discipline of the Church being managed by one Lay-Chancellor and his Court, with some small assistance, in a Diocess of many hundred Parishes, is utterly incapable of calling one of an hundred to repentance, or keeping clean the Church. And these are much of that which the Nonconformists refuse to subscribe their full Assent and Consent to, and to Covenant never to endeavour to reform, for which they suffer the loss of all. And now judge which side hath the looser principles and cause. And add their refusal to approve of that which they fear to be in many thousands, Perjury, and the rest which the Conformists never scruple, and try who are the *looser*, and have the greater Latitude of Conscience. And never did we yet meet with many that do believe that we live in more fullness, and idleness, and fleshly liberty than most of the Conformists do, which we speak not as accusing any, but in our necessary defence.

But he pretendeth to prove it, 1. By our Books. 2. By particular doctrines of Election, Justification, Good-works, &c.

But 1. Doth not the world know that the *Nonconformists* offer to subscribe the same Doctrine of the Church of *England* as the *Conformists* do, in the 39. Articles and the Book of Homilies? If one then have a wrong faith professed, so hath the other. And let them that must contradict the Doctrine which they subscribe, bear the greatest shame and punishment, and spare us not, if it be we. 2. Why is there no publick accusation against us these years, in which by his Majesties License we have preached openly, as for any unsoundness of our doctrine? 3. Who knoweth not that such accusing inferences are usually brought by all factious, quarrellsome Divines against their adversaries? Whence such Writings as *Calvino-Turcesinus*, &c. have sprung up. 4. The Reporter
here

here either chargeth on the *Nonconformists* the Doctrines of the *Antinomians*, (which none have more confuted) and of a few half *Antinomian* erroneous men (against whom he might have read the Writings of Mr. *Burges*, Mr. *Woodbridg*, Mr. *Gibbons*, Mr. *Warren*, Mr. *Jessope*, Mr. *Gataker*, and many other *Nonconformists*) or else he falsifieth their doctrine. He citeth *the Marrow of Modern Divinity*, written thirty years ago, by a Barber tainted with *Antinomianism*; and though he cite the names of five Independents that then approved or commended it too hastily, he never tells you how commonly both the *Presbyterian* and *Episcopal* *Nonconformists* (and very many *Independents*) reject and condemn it; and how many have confuted it (more than *Conformists* ever did). And blessed be God that our forecited Books are visible to report our Doctrine to the World. §. But he singleth out one of us from the report of a Conforming Contradictor, as making heinous sins, such as *Peters*, *Lots*, &c. consistent with true Grace. Reader, this is the true case (in which you will still see what justice we have from this kind of men), *Baxter* about near thirty years ago, endeavoured with all his power and diligence to reconcile the *Episcopals*, *Presbyterians*, and *Independents*, at least to joyn in the same Communion. He found the two latter full of distast against the Prelatical party of Ministers, but especially of the common people (even his own hearers) still saying, they are swearers, drunkards, meer worldly, loose, ungodly people, that have no seriousness in Religion, and it is not lawful for us to have communion with such. To cure them of this distast, he stretcht his charity as far as he thought just, to extenuate their faults, and told the people, 'That though many of these Prelatists would swear and curse, and 'had divers such faults; in the exercise of Church-communion, 'they that were not Pastors, but private men, must bear what they 'could not reform; and withall must compassionately consider, that 'many foul faults committed more through passion and custom, 'than love and interest, might stand with grace; and *Pauls* counsel, *Gal. 6. 1, 2.* was to be well considered. This being the scope of his discourse, and the end, what doth Mr. *Tho. Pierce* but retort it on him unthankfully to his reproach, as holding too loose a doctrine? Which this man here also now repeateth. But as he told Mr. *Pierce*, that for all this, if one were necessary, he had rather dye in the case of *Noah*, *Lot*, and *Peter*, in the time of their sin, than in the case of Mr. *Pierce* when he wrote that book
(being

(being perswaded that they had then more of the love of God and man than he) ; the same also he still professeth to this Enquirer, and all of his spirit that so unthankfully requite men for perswading the people to judge as charitably as they could for Concord sake of scandalous Prelatists : But if we be odious for pleading for charitable censures to such, what are they that live in the sin it self, and they that receive them constantly to their Communion ?

And here as a proof he tells us how *Dr. Hammond's Catechism*, and *Mr. Fowlers book of Holiness being the design of Christianity, have been censured*, and *Mr. Baxter for daring to justify the argument of that book*, p. 109. To which we say, 1. We highly value *Dr. Hammonds Practical Catechism* ; And it's strange, that if one of us have justified the argument of the other, that our Doctrine should not rather be gathered from such as he, than from we know not whom : For we must say that we know of none accounted Orthodox among us, who have at all disowned that book of *Mr. Baxters* : But we observe that these men most injuriously impute the very opposition of some Sectaries, and passionate weak persons, to us that are opposed by them, because that all go under the name of Nonconformists.

2. His second Reason is, *Our mighty shew of zeal in all Religious performances.* *Ans.* And how knoweth he that it is but a shew ? Are they like to be better that shew no zeal ? Can a man believe the great things of Heaven and Hell, and preach them without great seriousness and zeal, and not play the hypocrite ? Who is it that said, *Iſa. 58. 1. Cry aloud, lift up thy voice like a trumpet ? &c.* But Christs kinsmen themselves went about to lay hold on him, thinking that his zeal was a transportation or distraction, *Mat. 3. 21.* [*Vid. Dr. Hammond in loc.*] no wonder if mens tongues condemn us for zeal, though our consciences condemn us for remissness and coldness in matters of everlasting consequence.

3. His third Reason is p. 21. *A very great specious seeming sanctity in carriage and common deportment ; the sheeps clothing worn by the wolves, &c.* *Ans.* 1. Will not even strangers from such words suspect that our adversaries own not, or have not at least so much as such a seeming sanctity of carriage ? How else could this be noted as a difference ? 2. And how knoweth he that knoweth not hearts, that this is but seeming ? 3. And how do these charges of a loose doctrine and great seeming sanctity, well agree ? 4. Would he have us not so much as seem holy (and so not seem Christians)

that we may escape such censures? 5. And how shew we that we are *Wolves*? Christ meant that *Wolves* are known by their cruelty; and *Paul* saith, *Acts* 20. 29. that the grievous wolves that shall enter, will not spare the flock. We consels (230.) that we ever expected, that from our own selves some would arise, speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them, by reason of whom the way of truth should be evil spoken of; 2 Pet. 2. 2. and it hath accordingly come to pass with some; but with fewer of the Ministry than we might have feared, according to the experience of the first ages of the Church. But sure it is not we that wearing white garments have bloody jaws; we persecute none, we silence not our brethren.

And let our enemies judg of our Accuser by his own words, p. 125. *No men ever were better studied in all the little things that make a fair shew in the sight of the vulgar, and carry with them any appearance of piety. No men ever were exalter at Oral and Gestural sanctity, than they are; what their hearts are, God and their own consciences know, we will not judg them (when yet the Book is an opprobrious judging them); What can be said more for us than this? and how contrary is it to the rest of their Accusations?*

4. His fourth Reason runs thus, p. 126. *Another method by which these persons attract a great veneration from their followers, is the suffering a seeming persecution—They appear evidently on the suffering side, and providence hath cast them upon acting the sadder scene, the Laws are something smart against them—*

Ans. 1. This man yet confuteth the former that maketh us gainers. 2. But what escape is possible from such Accusers? Did we make those Laws against our selves? Do we persecute our selves? Shall Clergy-men provoke Magistrates to make such Laws as he calleth *smart*, and then make our sufferings to be one of our methods? If this be the method to obtain *Veneration*, I doubt such as the Accusers will hardly learn it. 3. But in our experience the vulgar usually most honour the prospering and upper side, and set light by sufferers, as if their very usage proved their desert. It is like to be the better sort that are so compassionate, and so much value men that for conscience are vilified by others.

But p. 132. he hath found out covetousness in our sufferings, which others lay upon us; and saith, that *Calamy* found three days in Newgate more gainful than half a years preaching at Aldermanbury: so that now we have found out another Vice that may

may possibly be in this matter, Pride and Covetousness too, &c.

Ans. Is this the Justice of Sacred Clergy-men? 1. Do they lay us with Rogues in the common Gaols for preaching the Gospel when they forbid us, and then envy us that charity there relieveth us, and that any are more merciful than themselves? Do these men believably preach Matth. 25. *I was hungry, and ye fed me—I was in prison, and ye visited me?* &c. 2. How knoweth this man what Mr. Calamy received? Is it likely that he knoweth what he saith to be true? which none of us know, that better knew Mr. Calamy than he. 3. If our friends are so liberal, sure they are a better sort of people than the Conformists, if those Preachers say true who tell the world what a wretched case their Clergy would be in. if their maintenance depended on the will and charity of the people. But to make them no better than they are, one of us that writeth this, can say by experience how like this report is to be false: for when he lay (for the ordinary cause) many times three days in the Common Gaol, he was never offered a groat by any, but one Countrey Knight, one Lady, and one Citizen (and a by-offer from one that he had reason to refuse) nor received a farthing from any but these three, which did but defray his Prison and Law charges, but not by many pounds his Losses by that prosecution.

5. His fifth Reason is, *Their continual applauding and commending their people, and crying them up as saints.*

Ans. 1. And what get we by so doing? 2. Why are we censured for preaching against mens sins, if we are flatterers? 3. Whom is it that we cry up for Saints? Is it only Nonconformists? Let our *Writings* witness whether our description of Saints be right or wrong. But if none must be justified as Saints, none will be saved as Saints. Which doth the world among us take for the plainer dealers? and which party for the more smooth and toothless Preachers?

And now let it be judged by impartial men, whether our sufferings were not enough, and the far sadder sufferings of the peoples souls by our divisions, and the (undeniable) want of due teaching in many places, without all the addition of these hard reproaches? And whether the cited *Debate-maker*, Vol. 1. p. 213. spake like a Divine, a Christian, or a man, when he said, "There can no account be given of their behaviour since, in cherishing this fancy among you, (or suffering it to grow) that Confor-

"mity is unlawful, unless it be this, that they think it will make
 "more for their reputation among you, if you believe it was con-
 "science, not care of their own credit and reputation, that kept
 "them from conforming]. When we can obtain leave to be heard;
 and give in our reasons, it will be better known whether they be
 but fancies. In the mean time, he that so boldly doth that which
 so many other stake to be sin of so grand a magnitude, should have
 better askt us for our reasons, before as a heart-searcher he had
 pronounced that *no other account* can be given: and he that is so
 free in naming those whom he traduceth, is not by sober charity
 to be believed when he telleth us that he *hath heard some acknow-
 ledge that they did not scruple what these men do*, when he nameth
 none; and we never knew such wretched fools, who were for
number or quality so considerable, as that the Nonconformists (and
 the refusers of Preferment in particular) should be known even
 in their secret intentions, by their words, and from them be cha-
 racterized. But sure he thinks himself, that some considerable
 party of men take Conformity for no indifferent thing, but a very
 shameful wickedness, if he think that we deny even Lordships and
 worldly Honours and Wealth, and all the love, reverence, and ho-
 nour which from the Conformable party is given to the Dignified
 Clergy, and take up instead of it, with poverty, reproach, and
 sometimes a Gaol, and all to escape the dishonour of Conformity,
 and obtain the contrary esteem. But they are not ignorant for all
 this talk, that some of us by free reprehending the faults of Non-
 conformists as well as others, (for they have their faults) have been
 as prodigal of our Reputation with them, as with the Conformists,
 when we could (with great gain also) have easily preserved it.

It is none of our desire to recriminate, or make any of our Con-
 forming Brethren odious. We suffer much with those people who
 think they may call a Spade, for seeking to moderate their
 censures of many or most of the Conformists. But we must not be
 blind and senseless under that calamity which wringeth out the
 Kingdoms tears and groans; nor on pretence of charity, be void
 of compassion to many hundred thousand souls. And therefore the
 Writings of *Gildas*, *Lucifer Calaritanus*, *Sulvianus*, *Sulpitius Severus*,
 and *St. Martins* Separation from the Prelates, are rendered to
 us the less censurable, by acquaintance with this age. And we read
 not *Alvar. Pelag.* without a Commentary; nor these words of
Mich. Clemangis Specul. Eccles. Pont. p. 7. de corrupt. Eccles. stat.

[Ubi]

[Ubi vero (ut fere affoles) paulum ex divitiis rerumq; secundarum affluentia, luxui & insolentia in Ecclesiam subiere, tepescere sensim cepit religio, virtus hebescere, solvi disciplina, charitas minui, tolli humilitas, paupertas opprobrio esse, simulq; parsimonia. Sed ut pompis & luxui res subesset, avaritia crebescere, qua non suis diu contenta finibus, aliena non modo ambire, sed rapere & invadere molitur, inferiores opprimere, & tam jure quam injuria spoliare—p. 9. Ita factum est, ut paulatim extincto in cordibus eorum spiritu, frigescente charitate, tepescente devotione, Deo deniq; oblito, solis terrenis fructibus capefcendis inhiarent, sola in dignitatibus beneficiisq; aliis molumenta pensarent. Nulla prorsus hodierna die in assumendis pastoralibus sarcinis, in curaq; animarum subeunda, de servitio divino, de salute subditorum aut edificatione, mentio habetur, de proveniunt ubertate tantummodo & quantitate quaritur—p. 31. Si quis forte pastor, surrexerit qui non hoc more incedat, aut qui pecuniam contemnat, aut avaritiam damnet, qui deniq; non omni via seu justa seu iniqua, aurum a suis subditis extorqueat, aut salutaris exhortatione vel predicatione animas lucrifacere studeat, & plus in lege Divina quam in legibus hominum meditetur, extemplo in morsu ipsius omnium dentes acutentur: Illum prorsus ineptum nec dignum sacerdotio clamitabunt.—p. 34. Quid loquar de exercitio sue jurisdictionis? Quae ita violenter & tyrannice regitur, ut magis hodie homines eligant tyrannorum immanissimorum, quam subire judicia ecclesiae.—Dici non potest quanta mala faciant illi scelerati exploratores criminum quos Promotores appellant; simplices & pauperculos agrestes, vitam satis innocuam in suis tuguriis agentes, & fraudis Urbanae nescios, in ju saepe pro nibilo vocant: Causas & crimina contra eos sedulo consingunt, vexant, terrent, minitantur; sicque eos per talia se componere, & pacisci cogunt: quod si facere rennunt, crebris eos citationibus quotidie impetant, & supra modum infestant. Quod si semel qualibet occasione prepediti comparere desierint, censurâ illos Anathematis, ut rebelles & contumaces feriunt; si vero ad diem venire, quoties vocati erant, perseveraverint, eorum audientia apud judicium tribunalia impediunt—quo longo radio, longaque sui temporis jactura fatigati, superdenturam vexationem atque impensam, pecuniae pactione redimere cogantur.—p. 37. Ex isto fonte profluit illa copiosa vitium atque indignissimorum Presbyterorum multitudo—si quis hodie desidiosus est, si quis a labore abhorrens, si quis in ocio luxuriari volens, ad sacerdotium convolat, quo adeptus, statim se ceteris sacerdotibus voluptuorum sectatoribus adjungit, qui magis

facundiam

secundum Epicurum quam secundum Christum viventes, & Campanulas seduli frequentantes, potando, commessando, pransiendo, convivando, cum tessariis & pila ludendo, tempora tota consumunt. Sed redeo ad nostros Episcopos, qui in omni lubricitate ab ineunte adolescentia educati, tales testes ut ita dixerim Ministros in Ecclesiam introducunt, quorum gesta memorabilia. Illud a me pratermissi non debet quod multi ex eis qui pastorali apice potiuntur, perque annosa tempora potiti sunt, nunquam civitates suas intraverunt, suas Ecclesias viderunt, nunquam pecorum suorum vultus agnoverunt, vocem audierunt, vulnera senserunt, nisi ea forte vulnera, quae ipsi suis utribus spoliis per alienos mercenarios eis intulerunt. Alienos dixi, quia & ipsimet mercenarii sunt, qui non gregis sui custodiam, salutem, profectum querunt, sed solum temporalia mercedis retributionem. Itaque ipsi verè sunt Mercenarii, tantum Episcopi habentes nomen, quia res per nomen signata procul abest. — sui corporis curam agunt, sese & non oves pascunt. — Disp. p. 115. Quia plerique carnales quibus hodie supra modum abundat Ecclesia, propterea pacem illam optant, ut in otio & tranquilla quiete, nullo interpellante turbine adversitatis, suis possint voluntatibus (ne dicam voluptatibus) liberius servire. Et quis illos in nomine Christi dixerit congregatos, qui hac mente unitatem querunt Ecclesia? qui tamen tot sunt, ut non facile sint numerabiles. Hi autem carnales filii Ecclesia non solum spiritualia nec curant nec sentiunt, sed etiam persequuntur eos qui sunt secundum spiritum. — Hi sunt qui pro temporalibus tantum commodis ad ecclesiam convolant, qui ad secularium formam in ecclesia vivunt, ambiunt, capiunt, rapiunt, praesse gaudent, non prodesse; subditos opprimunt & spoliunt, praelationis honore gloriantur, pompis, fastu, luxu letantur, qui questum pietatem aestimant — qui volentes sanctè, justè, castè, innocenter, spiritualiter vivere, cum cachinnis irrident, hypocritas appellant, crucifixosque comestores. — Talibus hodie ecclesia plena est, ut vix singulis capitulis aut collegiis alios invenire contingat. — p. 122. Qui nihil non modo probare, sed nec patienter audire possunt, quod sua voluntati vel cupiditati contrarium sit; Qui nihil de spiritualibus donis gustantes, siquis aliquid de spiritu dixerit, velut insulsum & insipidum cum risu & subannatione excipiunt, cum sibilis exussiant, cum clamore & contentione rejiciunt.

Bernard. Serm. 133. in Cant. Va generationi huic a fermento Phariseorum quod est hypocrisis, si tamen hypocrisis dici debet quae jam latere pra' abundantia non valet, & pra' impudentia non querit. Serpis hodie putida labe per omne corpus ecclesia, & quo latius

eo desperatius, eoque periculosius quo interius. Nam si insurgeret
 apertis hæreticus, mitteretur foras & arceretur, &c. Ecce in pace
 amaritudo mea amarissima: Amara prius in neco martyrium: ama-
 rior post in conflictu hæreticorum: amarissima nunc in moribus do-
 mesticorum: Non fugare, non fugere eos potest, ita invaluerunt &
 multiplicati sunt supra numerum: Intestina & insanabilis est plaga
 ecclesie, & ideo in pace amaritudo ejus amarissima. Pax est, & non
 est pax: Pax a paganis: pax ab hæreticis; sed non profecto a filiis.
 —Id. Ep. 249. Quis dabit mihi homines literatos & sanctos in ecle-
 siis Dei præesse Pastores, si non in omnibus, certe in pluribus, certe
 in aliquibus saltem?

But though we sigh and groan out these words of others, we
 intend not by them the accusation of any Worthy men, but to
 tell those that revile us for not being silent, that we cannot pos-
 sibly believe them, who in this age perswade us that our labours
 are unnecessary.

*The true Case of the Nonconformists Sufferings, which they are
 said to undergo through Covetousness of gain.*

We affect not to be querulous (though nature inclineth them
 to it that are hurt), nor yet to bring our Superiors under the
 dishonourable title of Persecutors; else had we not so many years
 been silent as to our own defence: But when even our Sufferings
 are made our crime, and said to be chiefly from our Pride and
 Covetousness, faithfulness to the Souls of men that are thus led
 towards the guilt of calumniating the afflicted; and faithfulness
 to the interest and honour of our office, requireth us modestly
 to tell the truth.

1. When Gods marvellous Providence restored his Majesty, we
 were some of us in Parishes whence the Parliament had before
 ejected others, yet alive, who presently took possession of their
 places in 1660: This is none of the matter of our complaint. But
 on Aug. 24. 1662, we were by Law made incapable of any sta-
 tion in the publick Ministry, unless we *subscribe, declare, and do*
 the other Conditions required by that Law. Not one of us that
 ever we heard, was cast out as criminal, for any error that we
 preached, or any evil that we had done: But for not *Subscribing,*

Declaring and Doing, as aforesaid, about 1800 or 2000 were at once disabled and cast out. The penalty for every Sermon that they should Preach (besides the loss of all the Ministerial Maintenance or Benefice) was three Months imprisonment in the Common Jail, and 100 *l.* for Administ'ring the Sacrament by any not ordained by a Bishop, though otherwise ordained when Bishops were deposed, and not to be had. Those Ministers who could bring their Consciences to hold all the things imposed to be lawful, did Conform. The rest being solemnly dedicated and vowed to the sacred Ministry (some by the Ordination of Bishops, and some of City and Country-Pastors) durst not lay aside their Office: Partly because of their Vow, conceiving it to be Sacrilege to alienate consecrated persons, and greater than to alienate consecrated things; and partly because of the notorious Necessity of the people; Multitudes being ignorant, and vicious, and ungodly, some Popish, or erroneous otherwise; and many Parishes not competently supplied, and the number of fit men both Conformable and not-conformable, too small in proportion to the peoples wants: Yet they concluded, that if once the *Number* and *Quality* of the Conformable Ministers were such as would make our labours unnecessary, we might either be silent, or go try to learn the language of some Foreign Land, where we might be of use: And we agreed, that the Magistrate having the power of the Temples, and publick maintenance, we must lay no claim to either against his will: And that though our office might not lawfully be deserted, nor the peoples Souls, yet the circumstances of Time, place, and numbers of hearers, &c. should be so chosen, as most tended to the ends of our office (the Churches good and mens edification), and to the preservation of the publick peace, and the due honour of our Governours): And that love, peace and submission to the higher Powers, and obedience to their Authority in all things lawful, was our indispensable duty, with Patience under all that we should suffer for our Ministerial work.

2. Some Ministers by their Patrimony, or what God had otherwise blest them with, were able to live when ejected, without extremity of poverty: but a great number had nothing, or next to nothing at all, having lived in places where they had but about 30, or 40, or 50, or 60 *l. per annum*, and not foreseeing a time of want: And a greater number that had some small matter of their own, had Wives and many Children, to whose maintenance their

their estates were very insufficient; so that *most* of the Nonconformists (as far as we can compute) were cast upon the Charity of others for their own and families subsistence. In this case some that pitied the distressed, would have set on foot a course among the *Londoners* and *Countrey Gentlemen* that were willing, for orderly help of those in their several Counties: But so many rumours of plots and jealousies were then raised, that men durst not undertake it, lest they should be accounted Plotters against the Government; and encouragers of those that the State discountenanced. One of us therefore moved, that our Rulers consent might plainly be requested, and he was sent to the Lord Chancellor *Hide* to request it; who said, God forbid that men should be forbidden to exercise their own Charity to Ministers in want: But yet though some talk, and uneffectual attempt was made hereupon, it was not prosecuted, because mens aforesaid fears still continued. But some charitable persons pitied the needy, and kept them from famishing and utter distress. And some few Ministers, of more than ordinary *Parts*, and *Name*, and *Acquaintance*, were better supplied than the rest. But those that were (as conscientious, but) of meaner parts, and more obscure, and small acquaintance, and lived in poor Countreys, were in great necessities: some have long lived with many Children, with almost nothing but brown-bread and water; and some have been ppt. to work for their living at very low and sordid employments (as *Muscullus* once did with a Weaver, and in the Town-ditch): some took Farms, and for want of stock and skill, run into greater poverty and debts: some that had studied Physick, turned Physicians, and so escaped want: some left the obscure Villages, through meer necessity, and betook them to *London*, and other Cities and great Towns, where the *Numbers* and *Ability* of the inhabitants might afford them some relief. And some by this siege did yield up their Consciences, and stretched them by forced interpretations of the words of the Declaration and Subscription, to Conform, and upon the review were cast into miserable distress of soul, which was more troublesome than poverty and famine: And some that thought it not their duty to be very scrupulous, and because they had not taken the Covenant, or medled in matters of Civil Contention or War, did judge themselves more capable than others of Conforming, did after upon review repent, and give up the places they had taken, and the practice which they had begun:

But all found, that the Number of persons that were both able and willing to relieve so many needy families, was small, and that most were either unable or remiss of their money; so that the sufferings of many were very great.

3. But the service that the silenced Ministers did, being now in private; an Act was made against Conventicles, and such penalties annexed as I need not here recite: And when the Act was expired, it was again revived, with many additions. And because that these Ministers lived mostly now on Cities and Corporations, or their former flocks that were acquainted with them, an Act was made (in the heat of all the grievous Plague) at Oxford, imposing on them an Oath, which he that took not, having kept any Conventicle, and after came within five miles of any City or Corporation, or place where he had lately preached, was to be sent six Months to the Common Jayl, and pay 40*l*. This Law was harder to them than the former: For, 1. many men that had made some shift to settle their habitation in the cheapest or most convenient place they could get, were forced to remove; yea most of the Non-conformists in England were constrained to change their dwelling. 2. Some lived with some friends or relations who would give them house-room or help, and they were thus driven away from their friends and relations, and such entertainments. 3. Abundance of them had their houses for a certain time, having Leases of them for years or life: And they knew not how to get Tenants to take such houses which were incommodious to Farmers, though fit for them. And they that before wanted bread and cloathing, were put to the streights of paying Rent for houses that must stand empty, being driven from them. 4. And they were hard put to it to find places in England to fix their dwellings in: for Corporations in most Counties are so near, that he that withdraweth five miles from one, doth come within five miles of another; or at least within five miles of some place where they had preached: And some laborious men, that thirsted after mens salvation, had gone about preaching over a great part of the Countrey, or the Land, and so were almost sentenced to banishment by this Law. And when they did find out a place that was five miles distant from all the prohibited places, it would be strange if there they should find empty houses, when Landlords use not to leave their houses untenanted and unpossessed: And if a house were empty, that it should be fit for a poor Minister, that could not take the ground

or farm; would be strange. And 5. when they found a capable place, they had not money to take it: Being poor before, and poorer by their removal. 6. And when they borrowed money to take it, they wanted money to pay for the removing of their goods, and the furnishing of their new habitations: Those that have tryed such changes, know how chargeable, as well as troublesome, they are.

But the thing that most eased them in all these straights, was, that [*Market-Towns*] were not put into the Act with [*Corporations*]; and so many Market-Towns being no Corporations, and there being houses to be had without farms or ground, many Ministers got into those Towns: which gave Dr. Fulwood occasion to reproach them as dwelling in populous places, which had least need of them (of which more anon). And some Ministers finding their streights so great, as that their imprisonment in the common Jayl was not more to be feared; and finding especially that they were no more warranted by God to desert the Souls in all Cities and Corporations, and all their ancient flocks, and all places where they had preached, and five miles round about all these, than the rest of the Land, yea that populous places had the greatest need, and their former Hearers might claim the greatest interest in them, and that Christ commanded his Apostles, when they were prosecuted in one City, to fly to another; they resolved to follow their work where they were invited, and to commit their liberties and lives to God.

But Gods dreadful judgments were the great cause of their freedom from these streights. The terrible Plague consumed so many thousands a week in *London*, that some Nonconformable Ministers durst not leave them in that distress, but stayed and preached to them, and visited them, and gathered money abroad for the poor, which greatly won the peoples hearts; and the face of death so prevailed with multitudes to awaken them from security, that the success of the Ministers was very great, and so great, as fixed their resolution to hold on, whatever it cost them. Multitudes of young people penitently lamenting their former sins, and begging of the Ministers not to forsake them in their distress. And so many of the Conformable Ministers fled from the infection, that the Bishop thought it best to connive at the preaching of the Nonconformists during that necessity. And quickly after, the lamentable fire consumed with the Houses Eighty nine Churches, which made the

necessity of preaching in other places more *extensive* and *notorious*; it being unmeet that so famous a Christian City should forsake all publick worshipping of God till the Houses and Churches should be all rebuilt. So that by this necessity a greater number of Nonconformists were needed and entertained in *London*; yea many Countrey-Ministers that came thither, and by their example the rest throughout *England* were much encouraged to appear more openly and resolutely in their work.

But in the mean time the Countrey Gaols were possessed by many faithful Ministers, where some have dyed, and some excellent men contracted those diseases of which they dyed shortly after; and some have dyed by the effects of poverty, by cold, and ill food, for want of necessaries. And the complaints of Wives and hungry Children, and the burden of debts for meat, drink, clothes, fire, and houses, hath been a sharper trial to very many of them, than their revilers seem to be acquainted with. And had they felt it but one year themselves, it's like they would not have thought this a way to gratifie either covetousness or pride. It's true, that we should rejoyce in all our tribulations, and in every condition be content; but humane frailty must be confessed; that some by such distress have been cast into sad melancholies, which yet seemed more tolerable too, than gripes of conscience for wilful sin.

And indeed the minds of few ingenuous persons will account it an ease to live on alms, and to be beholden to mens charity for their daily bread; especially when it's too well known how much most men do love their money, and how tenacious they are of it; and if they give once, how hardly they are brought to it again. Who that is able would not rather with *Paul* get their bread by some labour, than sordidly live on a barren and backward sort of charity? And the truth is, it is the poverty of the friends of the *Nonconformists* that hath been the cause of these defects. It's well known that it is but few comparatively of the Gentry that have owned them; but the Countrey Farmers of their several Parishes, whose payments and charges were so great, that they had little to spare from the maintenance of their own Families. And the lamentable fire so greatly impoverished the *Londoners*, and all the Countrey Tradesmen that depended on them (together with the decay of Trade) that the Streams were dried up that should have supplied the *Nonconformists* wants; so that if some very charitable

ritable Citizens and others, had not done extraordinarily for them beyond all others, they might have perished by Famine. And after all, the number in the City and other parts, who by the peoples liberality have a tolerable maintenance (which ignorance and envy call a *Plenty*) is very small in comparison of all those through the rest of the Land who have greater wants, and lesser helps.

And it hath not been the least of the said Ministers sufferings, that the continual uncertainty of their condition, hath disabled them from any commodious fixing of their habitations, and put them to the trouble and charge of frequent removals; one while severities drive them to retirement; and afterward his Majesties gracious Licenses draw them out to more populous places, and encouraged them to take houses accordingly, and put off the old: And shortly after, the revocation of the Licenses, and the sharpness of prosecution, puts them on the necessity of another change, which indeed to single men is less; but to the far greatest part who have families to remove and care for, they that have tryed it, and have no money to defray the charges of such removals, know what it is to be thus unseerled.

But all these are light afflictions, compared with the delights of-pleasing God, and saving Souls, and with the pleasures of our daily work, while we are employed in studying, proclaiming and trusting the certain promises of eternal life, and waiting for the promised reward in glory. And far be it from us to mention them as murmuring at the Providence of God; but only in confutation of the hard-faced Calumnies of some men, and to acquaint posterity historically with the truth. God is just in all the corrections which he layeth on us; we have deserved silencing, mulcts and imprisonments from him, yea he is exceeding merciful to us, both in our sufferings for truth and conscience sake, and in our preservations and deliverances; and we are far from repenting of our Masters work: But whether we deserve from men the accusations and usage which these 17 years we have undergone, we refer to his judgment, who will shortly by his just and final sentence decide this Controversie, and justifie the just.

33. Mr. *Hollingsworth* (in an *Affize-Sermon* printed) tells a story to prove his *Schilmaticks* as cruel as the execution of the Laws against us would be, that some one leading Sectary said, *He would have all banished that would not subscribe the Doctrine of the Church in the 36 Articles.* I wrote to him to know whom he meant, and he would not tell me, but (in a very respectful Letter) said, It was not nor Dr. *Manton*, &c. I since understood that this is said of Dr. *Owen*: But 1. he professeth it is false. 2. He is known to be for much liberty. 3. If he did say it, it was but to avert the odium of an overlarge toleration from the Independents. 4. And what is this to the case of the many hundred Nonconformable Ministers in *England*? But they be rendred odious for this word of his.

I will end with the Charge of *Henry Fowles* (passing over his abusive Volumes of Collections, lest I be over-tedious) in his History of Popish Treasons, this is his accusation, he saith of those whom he calleth *Puritans*: "I think the *Puritans* to be the worst people of all mankind. A Sect that will agree with you in the fundamentals of Religion, but will take Miss, and destroy all for a trifle; and rather than submit to an innocent Ceremony, though imposed by lawful authority, will ruine Kingdoms, Murder Bishops: A Sect that would hate Christ, but that he said he came not to bring Peace, but War. As for the *Roman Catholic*, I must needs have a greater kindness for him than the former fire-brands, as being an adversary more learned, and so to be expected more Civil and Gentile; and wherein they differ from us, they look upon as fundamental, and so have a greater reason for their dissent, than our Phanatical Presbyterians, a people not capable of a Commendation, nor to be obliged by any favours, their very Constitution being ingratitude.

At this rate the Ecclesiastical Politician, and others inform the world, of Puritans and Presbyterians in the Gross. Those that knew this mans Morals, laugh at his Railery; but posterity will not know what he was. I shall only desire the Reader to note,
1. That Puritans and Presbyterians now do signifie what the
speakers

speakers please. *Mr. Robert Bolton*, a Learned Conformist, thinketh that the name *Puritan*, as commonly used in *England*, in the mouths of common drunkards, and the prophane and impious sort, is turned against true Godliness, with the greatest spleen that ever word was in the world. 2. Mark, that we are called *The worst people of all mankind, even Heathens, Jews, Turks, Cannibals* not excepted; and yet we agree with the Accusers in all fundamentals? This is the Charity which we meet with from these men. Those of their own Religion, not charged with one doctrinal difference, if they obey not their Wills in every Ceremony, are the *worst of all mankind*. Reader, is this the Religion taught by *St. Paul*? *Rom. 14. 19.* and *Phil. 3.* where mutual forbearances, and Receiving dissenters is commanded, against both *Consumers* and *Despisers*? Will ever Church on Earth have Concord on these terms? Are such mouths fit to cast others *Fire-brands*? Is not this a disgrace to the Christian Protestant Religion; that all its fundamentals will not keep a man that differeth but in a Ceremony from being the worst of mankind.

3. Look back but on the Instances of our Nonconformity before laid down, and then tell thy self what to judge of such men; and such pens, as proclaim to the world, that it is but an *innocent Ceremony* that we submit not to. See the *Nonconformists Plea for Peace*.

4. Bethink you what our *Nonsubmission* or *Nonconformity* doth to ruine Kingdoms, in comparison of the course of such accusers. If poor men desire to serve Christ, though in poverty, with diligence, and peace, and Lordbishops shall say, *Either subscribe, say, and swear all this, or be silenced and cast out of all your Ministry and Maintenance*; Doth he now that patiently beareth all their penalties, loseth all, and goeth quietly to the Common Jayl among Rogues, for Preaching Christs Gospel to more than four without Swearing and Conforming, become hereby a *Ruiner of Kingdoms*, while they are innocent that do all this against them? Do they not *toto & nudato pectore talum recipere & tantum non*, with great Cameron unbutton them, and cry *Feri miser*? Is there any one word of *Rebellious Doctrine* proved by this man, when he hath done his worst out of any one Church-Confession of those whom he revileth? And if he can find any thing which is not found in the books of any particular men, in the late Wars, is that their fault that never owned it, and were then scarce born? Doth he, or
any

any of all the malicious tribe, charge those whom they reproach with drunkenness, gluttony, luxury, fornication, ambition, fraud, lying, or any such immorality?

5. Are those that suffer, and do so much for that which they think to be the truth of Christ, well charged with *hating Christ*? and is not the exception a prophane scorn of Christ? but that he said *he came not to bring peace*. It is easie to say with *Tertullus of Paul*, that he is a Ring-leader of a Sect, and a pestilent fellow, and a mover of sedition among the people: but where's the proof?

6. And mark why he professeth himself kinder to the Papists: 1. Because they are more *Learned, Civil and Gentle*. 2. Because they differ in supposed *fundamentals*. But 1. did he not know our advantage in Learning then was a great cause of the success of the Reformation in *Luthers* days? And who that knoweth the pitiful Priests in *France, Spain and Italy*, and what a generation *Erasmus, Stepphanus, Vives, Hutten*, and others describe, and what men the Reformation found in the Priesthood in *England*, and all other Countries, will believe this man, that the Papists are more learned? And though we truly honour the later Learned men that have been bred among them, their *Suarez*, their *Petavius*, and many more; yet he might know that our *John Reynolds*, our *Chamier, Sadcel, Bochart, Capellus, Rivet*, with multitudes of their like, were learned men as well as they: and so were *Rob. Parker, Amesius, Bradshaw, Paget*, and many other Nonconformists here: and *Twisse, Gataker*, and many more of the *Westminster-Assembly*. And all the Learning of the Papists in the world is not enough to make them know *Bread and Wine*, when they see, and touch, and taste it, which without Learning may be easily known.

2. But that *differing in supposed fundamentals*, should prove the Papists so much better than us, doth tell us with what sort of men we have to do: By that rule the *Mahometans* are much better than the *Papists*, and the *Heathens* yet better than the *Mahometans*, for they differ from us and them in greater things. I perceive why the *Jews* were crueller than the *Heathens*, and the *Papal* than the *Pagan Rome*, against the Ministers of Christ, because they differed not from them in so many and weighty points. Note, Reader, that this mans book of 20 s. Price, is written so prove that Treason, Rebellion and King-killing is the very Religion,

gion, and the ancient and later practice of the Papists: Their Councils are cited for it; and their chiefeft and moft learned Writers cited as maintaining the excommunicating and deposing Kings to be in the power of the Pope, and that in fo great a number, in their *own words*, the very Pages accurately and fully cited; that after a multitude that have written on that fubject, he hath quite over-done them all, and brought whole loads of Testimonies to prove it, to be the common doctrine of the *Roman* Church; fo that no man that ever wrote hath in this done fo much to render them unreconcilably odious to all Kings and Magiftrates, as this man hath done; and he hath given them the deepeft wound in point of Policy and Hiftory that was ever given them, with as bitter and odious terms of aggravation: And yet we that agree with him in all fundamentals, and refufe (as he dreameth) but a Ceremony, are *worfe, far worfe* than they. Had he only done by us, as he did by them, recited the words of our Synods and Professors, we would contentedly have left all to judge of our Confessions, and of each particular Author, as they deserve; and thofe that are proved culpable to bear the blame: But his fentence and inferences only tell us, how defirable the coming of Chrift is to his Servants; and how earneftly we fhould pray to the Judg of the World to come, and to come quickly.

Reasons why the Conformable Clergy should be desirous of their Brethrens Ministerial liberty, that cannot Conform, as is now required.

1. **Y**OU ought to be better acquainted with the Common state of peoples Souls, and the great necessity of Teaching in the Land, than Parliaments or Magistrates can be expected to be, who converse not with the people about their everlasting hopes, as your calling bindeth you to do. And you are obliged also to a double zeal, for the Kingdom of Christ and mens Salvation; As you still profess a zeal for the Church, when Revenues, Power or Ceremonies are the things in question. And men that have acquaintance with the Common state of Souls, cannot chuse but know, how insufficient they are of themselves without help, for so great a work among such multitudes, and what need most Parishes have of more than one (much more of one). If the Shepherds themselves should either be so ignorant, as to think that their ignorant Parishes need no more help than one man is able to afford to many thousands, or hundreds of Souls; and that the labours of others may be spared, because that which they do themselves is enough; or if they should be so proud, and strangers to themselves, as not be conscious of their single insufficiency, and the defectiveness of their own endeavours, and their need of help; or if they should have no more care of Souls, than to let them be untaught, or be deprived of such helps as God hath provided for them, rather than such as we should assist them; how unhappy will the people be that have such Pastors? and how unhappy will they find themselves at last? It will be woful enough to be charged at the last day, with the neglect of Souls; much more with the hindering of their Salvation, or being unwilling that other men should help them.

2. It hath in all ages been the way of Malignant enemies of Christ and Godliness, to hinder, silence or oppose the Preachers of the Gospel: Therefore if you do that which such men use to do, you will hardly ever escape being taken for such your selves by the people. For though you can distinguish your selves out of the guilt,

guilt, if you be your own Judges, and can say that you silence not the Preachers of the Gospel, but the Schismatics, the Nonconformist, that seareth Oaths, and Subscriptions, and Ceremonies ; yet the Wits of the vulgar are too dull to feel the strength of such subtle distinctions. If your Ax was used but to kill the Fly that fate on his forehead, yet if the man dye of the blow, the foolish people will say that you kill'd the *Man*. If a High-way-man take a mans Purse, and say, I took it from him, not because he is an *honest man*, but because he is *Rich*, and I am poor ; yet the gross-witted people will accuse him for robbing an honest man. If you should forbid half the Work-men in *London* to labour in re-building the City, and say you do it not to hinder the building, but because they durst not take the Corporation-Oath, or use a Ceremony ; yet the Citizens that cannot distinguish, will think that you hinder the building for all that. If you would cashier a considerable part of the Kings Army when they should go fight against the enemy, and say you do it only because they refused to wear any Colours besides the Generals, lest he should be offended, when perhaps the Chaplains impose other Colours on them also of their own, the dull-headed people would think for all that, that you were enemies to the Kings service, and should have punished them otherwise, without punishing the whole Army of the King.

And if the people take you for *Malignant Enemies* of the Gospel and Godliness which you preach, they will give you but little comfort in your Ministry, and they will receive but little profit from it. I speak not upon surmises, but that which I foretold you long ago, and that which now I have sad experience of : Before I and many hundred more were silenced, I found my self capable of perswading my old Hearers to some good opinion of you, and to incline them to come as near you as was possible : But since then, I have lost my power in that point : They are more averse to Communion with you than ever. The name of a Bishop is quite another thing in their ears, than it was before. All the interest that I have in them, and all the means that I could use, I am confident will never reconcile them to you more, till your own good works and merits reconcile them. They had before hard thoughts and fears of Bishops, because they heard how many Ministers they had silenced ; But when they *see* and *feel* it, their apprehensions are *deeper* of such matters than before. And if we talk to them against experience and sense, we talk in vain : If we tell them that

you are their Superiors, and must be revered; and they say, so are the Prelates and Inquisitors to the people of *Spain*; who are *worthy of fear*, but not of *Love*, they think they have answered us. If we tell them that you are of the same Christian Religion with us, and do all that you do for *Order* and *Decency*, and preach the Gospel your selves, though you are against our Preaching: If they reply to us, Tell us not of their sheep-skins, but see whether they have not claws and fangs, and see whether there be no blood upon their teeth! they think they have silenced our Charity by the reply. If we tell them that you are the *Fathers* and *Rulers* of the Church; and they bid us see whether you take not away the Childrens bread, and give them not a stone? and whether the Churches Lights be not put under a bushel? and whether they are snuffed or put out? We can give them no answer, which they will take for satisfaction in spite of their senses and experience. Of all the people that are and have been against Bishops in my days, I profess I knew not one of twenty, forty or an hundred, that was against them for their *Order* sake, as the disputing Presbyterians and Independents are, but for their *Works* sake: Alas, it is not one of an hundred that now dislike you, that ever studied any such controversie, whether Episcopacy be *Jure divino* or not; or whether they differ from Presbyters *Ordine vel Gradu*: But when they find their Ministers silenced, as Schismatics, and reviled as the odious part of the Land, whom they have tried and known by long experience, to be able, godly, faithful men; this is it that maketh them cry down Bishops. I find among all my sober acquaintance, that the name of *Usher*, *Hall*, *Davenant*, and many more Bishops is venerable with them, because they think they were good men. But judging by experience, is a disease that the people will never by all your Logick be cured of: Their weakness is such, that whatever flyeth away with the Chicken, they will call a Kit, and will not believe that it was a Dove! And whatever teareth the Lambs, they will call it a Dog or a Fox, and will not believe that it was a Sheep.

And indeed *Malignity* is so heinous a sin, that no Christian should too easily smile upon it. *Sensuality* turneth a man into a *Beast*; but *Malignity* into a *Devil*. He therefore that would not be accounted such, must neither do as they do, nor that which is so like it, that none can distinguish them, but those that borrow the Agents spectacles. If you had only made a Canon, that we shall

shall be silenced when ever we Preach Heresie (though you had denied us a first and second admonition), or else when we Preach Treason, Sedition, or Schism, the people would have justified you ! But if you will say, Cross a child, or subscribe that we have not mistaken a word in all these three books, &c. or else you shall not preach the Gospel of Salvation, nor labour to save the peoples Souls, nor perswade them to think on the life to come : they will presently remember such Texts as these, *1 Thess. 2. 15, 16. They have persecuted us : they please not God, and are contrary to all men, forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins alway ; for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost, Acts 4. 2, &c.*

3. Experience assureth us, that from the beginning of the Church, to this present day, Christ never gave too many *able faithful* Ministers to his Church : Supernumeraries of such were never its disease, nor the amputation of them its cure. There is still need of the Lords-prayer, *Thy Kingdom come ; And, Pray the Lord of the harvest to send forth labourers, &c.* That man is but a Christian or a Pastor in jest, and Image, and not in earnest and reality, who thinketh that the Pastors now allowed are so sufficient for the great employment of the Ministry, that more are but supernumerary, and the rest may be spared, without any detriment to the souls of men. Even in the Apostles age of Miraculous gifts, Dr. *Hammond* thinketh the Pastors were so scarce, that every Episcopal Church had no more than one Bishop, with some Deacons, without ever a Subject Presbyter ; And that there was *de facto*, none of the *Order of Subject-Presbyters* in Scripture-times, (And so think all the Presbyterians too). And it is a notorious truth, that afterwards the Presbyters were so low in abilities, that publick preaching in the Church, was mostly used by the Bishops only. And many Countries have lost the Gospel for want of Preachers : And wherever ignorance and prophanenels have broken in upon the Church (as the *Greeks, Abassines, Armenians, Moscovites, Papists*, and too many Protestant Churches), it hath commonly been by the decay of able, godly, faithful Pastors : And if one City or Parish of ten thousand have had too many, their near neighbours have so much wanted them, that they could not be esteemed supernumerary. And in *England* there are few Parishes which need not helps, even where the ablest men are placed, much more where—
Is it seasonable then, or doth it answer the Will or Providence of God,

to call in so many, when the Church hath always had too few?

4. The punishment which you inflict upon the Ministers, doth fall a thousand times more heavily on the souls of the innocent people, who without being accused, or speaking for themselves in a Legal trial, have so great a penalty inflicted on them, as none but a believer that judgeth of things in reference to Eternity, is able to estimate a right.

Alas! to the Preacher the suffering is small, in comparison of the peoples! What if they live poorly! what if they want house, or clothes, or bread! How small a matter is that in comparison of the want of knowledg and faith, of grace and salvation? I confess their sufferings will cost them dear that are the true cause, (when Christ condemns those that do not relieve them): But to themselves it is no such dreadful business: Nay if they were but discharged in conscience from the Ministerial Office, most of them might live in much more peace and plenty in the world. There are many other Callings to betake themselves to, in which they might live quietly, and not be as the Hare before the Hunters, pursued from place to place with cries, as if they that will imitate *Paul* in labours, must bear also his reproach, as *pestilent fellows, and movers of sedition among the people*; that do contrary to the decrees of *Cesar*, and turn the world upside down Yea, many are already turned Physicians; and they have better words, and kinder usage.

But every man that hath the eyes of a Christian in his head, and seeth what the people of *England, Wales, and Ireland* are, for numbers and for quality, and seeth and heareth also what Ministers for number and quality do instruct them, doth know as certainly that many hundred thousand souls do wofully need more Ministerial helps, as he knoweth that five hundred Scholars do need more than one School-master, or five hundred sick men need more than one Physician. But O what a plague is it to the Church and World, to have Ministers who when they read of the necessity of knowledg, holiness, and salvation, do neither believe Christ nor themselves! Argue not the people into such hard thoughts of you, as if this were your case, by perswading them that it is no matter whether their souls have any more Ministerial helps than now is given them.

Either you believe that *where the Gospel is hid, it is hid to them that are lost*, and that the cure of gross ignorance, hard-heartedness, unbelief, and sensuality, are of necessity to salvation,

on, or not. If not, deal openly, and silence both your selves and us. If yea, then either *you know* how these *maladies abound* in the people, and how much *labour* the cure doth usually cost, or not. If not, then take not on you to be Pastors or English men, or competent Judges of any of the peoples cases and concerns, but confess that these are matters that you are strangers to. But if you do *know* this, then I need to say no more to you, but to desire you to suppose that soul-necessities are not the less because men complain not of them; but greatest where there is the greatest insensibility and contentedness with them. The Turks and Heathens cry not out for the help of Christian Pastors. The worldling, drunkard, and fornicator, is most miserable, that would have no reproof or help. Suppose therefore that their *necessities* are instead of cries, and that you hear them calling to you for help: O pity the many hundred thousand souls that are drowned in ignorance, unbelief, insensibility, worldliness, and sensuality, that are utter strangers to that life of faith, and love, and holiness, without which none can *please* or *see* God; and must quickly be converted and made new creatures, or they are lost for ever. Or suppose that their *necessities* being their complaints, you heard them expostulating with you for their souls: 'O take not from us that means which God by *Nature* and by his *Institution* hath made so needful to our salvation! Alas, our ignorance, and deadness, and worldly-mindedness, and fleshly affections, are too hardly cured by all the best means and diligence that can be used: what shall we do then, if you deprive us of that which we have enjoyed! Alas! say not that the reading of the Scriptures, and a few lifeless notes of a Sermon will serve turn: We confess that it should do so, if our disease were so light as to need no more; the thing it self is good, and every word of God is precious; but it is the nature of our disease to be read asleep, and hardened in our sins by the customary hearing of a few good words in a *sleepy saying* tone: It is the skilful choice of pertinent Truths, convincingly and clearly uttered, and closely applied with life and seriousness, that our case requireth: We confess, that if a School-boy, or a raw ignorant youth from the University, did but read a chapter, or say over a less pertinent cento of good words, we should be moved and converted by it. But our disease is *deadness*, *darkness* and *disaffection* to holiness, to God and Heaven; and *liveliness*, *desire*, and *love* to the world.

'world and fleshly things; and without a miracle these will not
 'be cured, nor our souls be saved, without *lively, clear, and affec-*
 '*ionate* preaching, agreeable to the sacred Truth delivered; nor
 'without the help of prudent conduct, and the constant watch-
 'fulness of tender love, and the example of a holy heavenly life.
 'O therefore pity our miserable souls, that must be saved now by
 'the Gospel of salvation, or be damned to everlasting fire. You
 'tell us so your selves; and if you would have us believe you,
 'shew us that you believe your selves. You speak for *good works,*
 'and what better works than the saving of mens souls! And how
 'shall we hear without a Preacher? O give us such for number
 'and quality, as will imitate *Paul, Act. 20.* that covet no mans
 'silver and gold, but will teach us publickly and from house to
 'house, day and night with tears; that will be instant in season
 'and out of season, reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with all long suf-
 'fering and doctrine, in meekness instructing even opposers of the
 'faith, much more the tender children of him who is the father of
 'mercies. Alas! we have enemies enow, the Devil, and the
 'World, and the Flesh, are enemies of our faith, and holiness,
 'and salvation; and we are the greatest enemies to our selves: be
 'not you also our enemies and destroyers, who call your selves our
 'Pastors and our Fathers. Think what it is for such a multitude of
 'souls to be shut out of heaven for ignorance, unbelief, impeni-
 'tency and ungodliness, and to lye in hell for ever; and how lit-
 'tle comfort it will be to us in our torments, to be told that the
 '*Order and Decency* of Church-affairs did require it; or that it
 'was necessary to preserve the interest of the Diocesans. O make
 'not such merchandize of our souls. Christ purchased them with
 'his blood: Do not you sell them for thirty pieces of silver. He
 'scourged the buyers and sellers out of his Temple; do not you
 'drive out the faithful Preachers. He overthrew the tables of the
 'money-changers; do not you overthrow the doctrine, discipline,
 'or Table of the Lord. He came from Heaven into flesh to seek
 'and save those that were lost; do not you contrive and labour to
 'famish and destroy them. He gave them his flesh and blood for
 'food; do not you devour their flesh and blood. He preached in
 'Ships, and Mountains, and Wilderesses, and Houses, to many,
 'and to few; to rich and poor, to ignorant women, and the mean-
 'est and the worst among the people; do not you think then that
 'to read to us those words which we can every day read at home,

' of to make a formal speech to us once a week, is enough to cure
 ' such souls as ours. There is joy among the Angels of God in hea-
 ' ven over one sinner that repenteth ! O do not you rejoyce to
 ' hinder the preaching of Repentance unto thousands ! Christ set
 ' up a Ministry, to preach the Gospel to every creature under hea-
 ' ven, and to teach them whatever he hath commanded, even to
 ' the end of the world ! Do not you contradict him, and say,
 ' Preach not ! Kick not against the pricks ! Wo to him that striveth
 ' with his Maker ! Who hath hardened himself against him, and
 ' hath prospered ? The saving of Souls is too good a work for any
 ' that is good to strive against ! And Christs Ministers are *workers*
 ' *together with him, and not against him.* If you take away from our
 ' mouths the bread of life, it will be cold comfort, and a poor
 ' relief to us in our misery in hell, to tell us that they were *pestilent*
 ' *fellows, and ringleaders of a sect,* that would have saved us ; that
 ' is, that they were not conformable to your Subscription, Oath
 ' and Ceremonies. Suppose them to be in the wrong, and you in
 ' the right ! Why must our Souls be left to damnation, because our
 ' Teachers think that a *sin*, which you think you your selves have
 ' made a *duty* ? Shall not the soul that sinneth dye ? If they have
 ' eaten sour grapes, why must our teeth be set on edge ? If he be
 ' *mistaken* that thinks that it is aggravated *Lying and Perjury* which
 ' he refuseth, which you say is but a *thing indifferent*, yet Christ
 ' is not to be blamed for that : And why shall the fire of his kind-
 ' ling be quenched, his gifts be suspended, his Gospel hindered, his
 ' redeemed ones forsaken, because some of his Ministers were, as
 ' you thought, too fearful of offending him ?

O hear these expostulations of miserable Souls, before you are
 speechless under the Expostulations of the tender Saviour of
 Souls ?

5. You have other punishments enough, besides forbidding
 them to preach Christs Gospel, whereby to be revenged on Non-
 conformity. Is their searing an Oath a greater sin than prophane
 swearing ? If not let us pay at the same rates for not swearing,
 and for not disobliging all others from a Vow, as swearers do by
 the Law for every Oath. And we will not desire you to execute the
 Laws as seldom on us, as they are executed on them ; which is
 not, I think, for one Oath of Twenty thousand ? Or are we worse
 than drunkards, or fornicators ? If not, punish us no worse than
 they are punished ? Are we worse than petty thieves ? If not, let

us be put in the stocks and whipt, as *Paul* and *Silas* were, so we may but preach *Christ's Gospel*? Or if we are as bad as felons, allow us our Clergy, and burn us in the hand, use us as *Prin*, *Bastwick* and *Burton* were used on the Pillory, so you will not hinder us from preaching to sinners, the word of salvation. Or put us in the House of Correction, and use us as the *Israelites* were used in *Egypt*, rather than forbid us to labour to save the peoples Souls? Can your profound understandings find no way to punish a man that feareth Lying, Perjury, and false Worship (suppose mistakingly), which will consist with such intermission and liberty as is necessary to the doing of our Masters work? The servants of the King and Parliament are priviledged from arrests and molestation, which would hinder them from their necessary duty: We crave no impunity for our sins above the basest subjects in the Land! We will be thankful to be under no severer usage, than *Colliers*, and *Barge-men*, and *Seamen*, and begging Rogues and Vagabonds have; yea constrain us to beg our bread in rags from door to door, rather than restrain us from doing the work to which in our Ordination we are devoted, and by the belief of a life to come, obliged. Have all other faults more suitable punishments, save only those of the Ministers of Christ? You can punish your child, without forbidding him, to love you or obey you: you can punish a School-boy otherwise than by forbidding him to learn; and a Master, otherwise than by forbidding him to teach; and your Servant, otherwise than by forbidding him to work; and Eighteen hundred scrupulous Physicians, otherwise than by forbidding them to help the sick. Deal not worse with Christ and Souls.

But if still you say, that there is no other way to save mens souls from our false doctrine, or false worship, or any other danger which our Ministry will bring upon them; We still answer you, Make Canons and Laws against false Doctrine, or against Seditious, Rebellious, Schismatical, or other intollerable Preaching, or against Idolatrous, or superstitious Worship, or against either Tyranny or omission of Church-discipline, or against a worldly, fleshly, idle, or otherwise vicious life; and let us be lyable to the penalty of those Laws, as others are. But the next shall further answer this.

6. It is a most certain thing that your method will not attain the Churches Edification, Unity or Concord, but is the directest way to subvert all these: No nor your own establishment, or honour

nour in the world, if that be it which you mean still, by the Interest of the Church. And why should any men use a *means* that will *subvert*, and will never *attain* his *ends*? Did you *know this*, you would never chuse or use it. But I perceive you *do not*, and for ought I see you will not know it. I shall give you those reasons that should make you know it, if you have but the understanding of ordinary men; supposing what is distinctly said in the Propositions.

Every wise man in the use of means, will both foresee the probable effect, and fore resolve how far to carry them on. Either you think that your silencing, and other hard usages of the Ministers, shall convince and change them, or disable and destroy them. The former I have shewed you is a most vain surmise: For, 1. Kindness is more forcible to change the judgment, than violence and hard usage. This useth oftener to set men in opposition to what a hurtful adversary reasoneth for. It is seldom that an enemies words convert. Opposition rather kindleth an opposing zeal.

2. You may partly conjecture by your selves. If you thought it were Lying, Perjury and false Worship which was imposed on you, would you charge your judgment, by threatnings or by punishments? There is nothing in force to illuminate the mind. If you say, It will tame their obstinacy, and make them hearken more to reason, I answer as before: It most powerfully exciteth those prejudices and passions, which hinder reason, though it may promote hypocrisie in some.

3. And experience telleth you and all the world, that you are mistaken: We read the same books out of a prison, as in it (if there we may have them): And what abundance of Ministers, within these ten years, have come out of long imprisonment in the same mind as they went in (yea much confirmed). But who can you name that came out convinced that his way was wrong? How long have they suffered, not only poverty and reproach, but that silencing which they account a greater evil? And yet how few are changed by all this (For the *Novel Politicians* talk of a *hundred men* that continue to displease you, is but a means to tell the world, how exactly your *Actions* and *Historical Narratives* agree, and what posterity must expect from the later, as well as we from the former).

4. But if 9 or 10 years experience be too little for you, look back to the experience of all the world. Your Bishop *Taylor*, and many

many of your own, can tell you, how opposition inflameth the opposed party into a greater zeal.

5. In a word, I know not only my self, but so many of the Non-conformable Ministers of *England*, that I utterly despair that even silencing or imprisonment should change their judgments.

2. The next question then is, Whether it will make them hypocrites, and force them to go against their judgments? And this I am as confident it will never do. with the most: 1. Because I know

so many of them to be truer to God and to their Consciences. 2. Because experience also long evinced this. 3. And so hath the experience of former ages, in such as they: some have still shrunk in a time of suffering: But enow have suffered to fill up such Volumes as Mr. Fox's, and the Century-Writers, and many others.

4. And here also I ask, Would you *do so your selves*? Would you do that which you think to be Lying, Perjury, renouncing Reformation, &c. against your consciences, rather than suffer? or would you not? If yea, you tell the world what your Religion is? If not, judge by your own course, both now and formerly, whether they or you be liker to chuse sin before suffering. I know not you so well as them; and therefore know not what you would do, so well as I, and you, and all the world may know what *they* will do.

5. And if they were such Villains, as to sell their Souls for the safety of their flesh, why should not the same principle now prevail with them, to stretch their conscience by some distinction, and take Livings and Honour among you with Conformity, instead of a hunted and afflicted state of life? If Satan shall say, *Skin for skin, and all that he hath will a man give for his life: Let me touch his body, and I will make him curse thee to thy face; whereas now he serveth not God for nought.* Yet God would support and vindicate the integrity of *Job*; and though he may fall into some impatience, he would not yet forsake his Master, nor leave his integrity to the death.

3. The last question therefore is, Whether their *destruction* will do your work, or not, seeing neither their *change of judgment*, nor *forsaking their consciences*, is to be expected by your means?

I find that the *Novel-Politician* is confident of it, that sharp execution is the way, and would easily do it: And so are most that write against us, as well as Bishop *Gunnings* Chaplain. But, 1. He speaketh but like one of *Rehoboams* puny Councillors; contrary to all the experience of the world. I hope God will give his Majesty wisdom to avoid such counsels, that would have him make his little
finger

finger heavier than *Solomons* loyns. I confess if the work be to extirpate Christianity it self, they that *will* and *can* follow it to the height of the example of *Japon*, might imagine a possibility of the like success. But it *cannot* be done so in *England*, if there were any that would do it : Because the body of the Nation is of the same Religion, as the *Japonions* were against. Or if the work were to suppress the Protestant Religion, the Inquisition in *Spain* would be a probable means, where there are but very few to be tormented, and the thing may be done secretly in vaults, out of the peoples sight and noise. But for Protestants to destroy each other, yea such and so many as must be so destroyed, and this for the advancement of the Protestant interest, is a course that will not do that work for which it is pretended.

For, 1. Blood was never yet of light digestion : *Nebuchadnezzars* furnace devoured the Executioners ; and so did *Daniels* Lyons too. God hath ever shewed himself a God of Love, and an enemy to the enemies of it. Many are the afflictions of the righteous ; but God hath many ways to deliver them out of all. As I said already, who would have thought that snow should have escaped *Queen Marias* Bonafires to have planted a Protestant Church so soon ? Or so many escaped the *French* Massacre, as so soon to have made that fact repented of, and ring to the Odium of the Actors through the world ; Yea that so many should survive the Two hundred thousand murdered in *Ireland*, as to see so terrible a revenge : Yea that the far greater Murders of the poor *Waldenses* and *Albigenses* should be followed with a resurrection of the witnesses of the truth, with double advantage ; and leave the everlasting odium of bloody cruelties upon *Rome* ; and that the *German* sufferings should so soon be revenged by the *Swedes* ? Or that the desolations, which for the *Interim* were made among the *German* Ministers, should so soon be repaired ? Or that the Prelacy which *Constantinus*, and other *Arrian* Emperors set up, should so soon be changed, and the *Arrian* cruelties recorded to their perpetual shame ? And that the *Vandals* in *Africa* should but murder Ministers enow to kill themselves with the stroke : Or that the true Persecutions of the Heathen Emperors should but increase the Church of Christ, and the blood of Martyrs should be its seed ? Or that fewer Nonconformist Ministers than there be Counties in *England* in 1640, should multiply into that number as they did within two or three years ? Or that the *Diocesan* Ministers, suppress

prest by *Cromwell*, should revive to the strength that they were in, within three years after his death? Men may contrive, but God will dispose: *Caiphas* may think that one should dye for the people, rather than all the Nation perish; and the fact may prove their speedy and most dreadful ruine.

2. And as blood cryeth loud to God for revenge, so it usually maketh the actors so odious in the world, that *men* will hardly leave it unrevenged. There is no hope that ever you should be able to extirpate both grace and good nature out of the world. There will be some sparks of love and humanity in the minds of men, when interest quencheth them nor, when you have done all. And these sparks of charity and humanity will make all the actors of cruelty odious; and the people will take them for Bears and Wolves. Yea, if you were able to perswade others by your words and books, as you do your selves by your interest and passions, that we are as very fools, and disobedient to your Lordships, as you describe us, yet most men, and especially *English* men, will pity the suffering side, and will think with heart-rising on the men of blood. When the *Puritans* suffered, the people pitied them, and cryed out against the *Prelates*. When the *Diocesan* party suffered, the people pitied them, and cryed out against *Cromwel* and those that cast them out. And now they are turning about again (tho' I know there are many more cases do concur).

3. And God having resolved that the memory of the just shall be blessed, and that the name of the wicked shall rot, and that the greatest of the ungodly shall not be the Master of Fame, nor any more able to leave an odium on the name of the just, than to pursue their souls with malice into heaven; no, nor so much as to preserve their own names from odium, any more than to keep their bodies from corruption. It hence comes to pass, that the very odor and perfume of sufferers names that endure the wrath of man for the sake of God and conscience, doth so invite posterity to their mind and way, that multitudes quickly rise up in their steads. And the loathed names of the persecutors of the godly, doth make posterity shun their courses. What a stink hath the name of *David Seton* in *Scotland*, of *Bonner* of *London*, and *Gardiner* Bishop of *Winchester*, left behind? The like I may say of all such men.

4. Moreover the same reasons that prevail with us, will prevail with others when we are dead. They will be as fearful of lying, and

and perjury, and of swearing Allegiance to Church-usurpers, as we have been. There will still be a people seriously religious; that are Christians in good sadness, and really believe a life to come. There is no hindering it; God will have it so, and who can gain-say him? And these men will be as loth under pretence of order and decency to have Religion dwindle into a lifeless form of words and ceremonies, and to take the chaff and straw for the corn, as ever we have been before them. And the History of our sufferings will but animate them.

5. Besides this, 1. While you are doing your work, you are dying; you are (alas! that's the cut-throat of your comforts) but mortal men your selves; *Banner* is dead, and *Gardiner* is dead; *Guise* is dead, and *D'Alva* is dead. King *Edward's* Reformation, and *Q. Maries* Persecution were both cut short by the shortness of their lives. When you have destroyed ten, or twenty, or an hundred Ministers, and are resolving, Thus we will use them all; A Fever, or an Apoplexy, or some other Messenger of an offended God, doth stop you in your course, and call you to judgment, and tell you that when it is too late, which you could not hear from such as we.

*Cum tamen a sigulis munitam intraverit urbem.
Sarcophago contentum eris: Mors sola fatetur,
Quantula sint hominum Corpuscula—.*

Nature will not suffer you long; and Justice oft anticipateth the time of Nature. The strange Histories of Gods Judgments are not all fables.

*Nullane perjuri capitis, fraudisq; nefanda.
Pæna erit? Juv.*

6. And sometimes God stoppeth a *Saul* in his way with greater mercy. And sometimes crosses make men melancholy, and retire from their cruel course. Can you think of two such instances as *Dioclesian* and *Charles the fifth*, without admiration? And oft-times an accusing-conscience beginneth such a hell on earth, as interrupteth the execution of malicious purposes. And sometimes the very odium of the people turneth them off with shame; both which the same Poet intimateth, *Sat. 13.*

Exempla

*Exemplo quodcumq; malo committitur, ipsi
 Displicet auctori. Prima est hac ultio, quod se
 Iudice, nemo nocens absolvitur, improba quavis.
 Gratia fallacis Prætoris vicerit urnam.
 Quid sentire putas omnes Calvine, recenti
 De scelere, & fidei violata crimine.*

And domestical afflictions may cool the fire of your consuming zeal ! You must not look to be still imposing crosses, and making crosses for your neighbours, and *feel none* your selves : It may be your great Patrons may dye, or fall, or forsake you, and then your hearts are broken ! It may be death may enter into your own families, and make you think what blood-thirstiness doth tend to.

*Ut Vigent sensus animi, ducenda tamen sunt
 Futura natatum ; rogos aspiciendus amata
 Conjugis, & fratris, pleneq; sororibus urna.
 Hæc data pœna diu viventibus, ut renovata.
 Semper clade domus, multis in luctibus, inque
 Perpetuo dolore, & ingra veste senescant.*

7. And you must consider also, that if blood or destruction be the means which you trust to, you must set up a *Shambles*, or trade of butchery, and make it the profession of all your lives : For it is egregious folly to think, that it is but like the fighting with an Army, where all your enemies are in sight before you ; and if you conquer them, you may kill them all at once : For they are dispersed all over the Land ; and they cannot all, in a little time, be detected, and fairly convicted and brought to execution : But you must be a long time about the killing of those that are now in being ; And when they are gone, the *Sarculi* that spring out of their stumps, will in number perhaps exceed them, and find you work as long as you live. And then one cruel act will seem to cause a necessity of another, to justify it, and to make sure work, lest those that you have wronged, or any of their friends should possibly live to see your folly make you miserable (Therefore the *Japonians* kill'd and tormented not only the Christians, but their kindred, and all the next inhabitants). And besides, when men turn to so great sin, God usually so forsaketh them, that they cannot

cannot tell how to make an end; They thirst for blood, till like Leeches they fall off with fulness: And the more wickedness they do, the more they are disposed to do. That you may see I have my boys School-books, though I am driven from my own, you shall have some more of *Juvenal*:

*Mobilis & varia est ferè natura malorum.
Cum scelus admittunt, superest constantia: quid fas
Atq; nefas tandem incipiunt sentire peractis
Criminibus; tamen ad mores natura recurrit
Damnatos fixa, & mutari nescia: Nam quis
Peccandi finem posuit sibi? quando recepit
Ejectum semel attrita de fronte ruborem?
Quisnam hominum est quem contentum videris uno
Flagitio?*

And verily there was never any, or many known, that set up this carnificine trade, the stink of whose name did not reach as far as fame could carry it to the ears of men. And you will tempt men not only to think odiously of *your selves*, but to suspect *your cause* that needeth such a trade, to keep it up: Even *Erasmus* had almost been made a Protestant, by the burning and tormenting of some Protestants: And *Hospitalius*, *Thuanus*, and the whole tribe of those learned moderators in *France*, were driven from the extremer sort of Popery by the extremity of their bloody cruelties. The nature of man pitieth and loveth chickens, and lambs and harmless loving creatures; and it hateth Foxes, Wolves and Kites, that live on flesh, and devour those that are better than themselves. Or if you could pretend that you had been first *abused your selves*, and did it in *revenge*, the world will think that you should be revenged but proportionably, and that on none but them *that did it*: yea *revenge it self* is a sign of a weak, ignoble soul, that hath little of a man, and less of a Christian.

*Quippe minuti
Semper & insigni est animi, exiguique, voluptas
Ultio; & continuè sic collige quod vindicta
Nemo magis gaudet quam famina; cur tamen hos tu
Evasisse putes, quos diri conscia facti
Mens habet attonitos, & surdo verberare cœdit*

*Oculum quatiente animo tortore flagellum?
 Poena autem vehemens, ac multo sevirior illis
 Quas & Caditius gravis invenit, aut Rhadamanthus,
 Nocte dieq; suum gestare in pectore testem.*

Therefore the foolish Ambitious Idols, who would fain be like to God in power, will yet pretend, that they would be like him also in Love and Mercy! And *Nero* will not disdain to read *Seneca de clementia*, & *de Ira*. They would have power to do as much mischief as you can imagine; but they say they would not use it, but affright men by it into the obedience of their wills.

*Et qui nolunt occidere quenquam
 Possunt volunt.*

But as the power breeds fear, so usually fear breedeth hatred. Though, I confess, it is not possible to have a sufficient Power to do good, without a Power to do some hurt.

8. And then the whole Countrey will take notice how many worse men you leave alive, which will increase the odium; and make them look on you but as the enemies of mankind, and of all virtue and civility: or as the seed of the Serpent, that have an enmity to the Womans seed: They will call you by the name of *Cainites*, when they see the blood of your brother *Abel*, while evil workers still survive. When such as *Ames*, *Baine*, *Bradshaw*, *Hilderham*, *Dod*, &c. yea as *Hooker*, *Bilson*, *Jewel*, &c. are hanged (which must be done if you will extend the punishment to all Nonconformists), the people will take notice, that thousands of fornicators, drunkards, ignorant fots, and senseless Atheists are suffered to live in peace! And do you not know what they will say and think of you upon such observations? They will say, If these Learned, holy, faithful Preachers would but have turned drunken fots, they might have escaped your jaws as such have done. As the forecited Poet mockt at *Cicero's*,

*O fortunatam, natam me Consule Roman,
 Antoni gladios potuit contemnere si sic,
 Omnia dixisset: ridenda poemata malo,
 Quam te conspicua divina Philippica fama—*

If these Preachers would have talkt a little half sense, and read a cold Oration, and lived like those that have little to do with God and Heaven, and would save men by a charm of words and shews, without this *serious Godliness* and *Christianity*, they might have had countenance and maintenance, and as much honour as such men as these can put upon them: But *judicious, serious, hearty Godliness* is intolerable to all the fleshly tribe, whose mind neither is nor can be subject to the Law of God, to which their interest and disposition hath an enmity.

*Eloquium ac famam Demosthenis aut Ciceronis
Incipit optare, & totis quinquatribus optat,
Quisquis adhuc uno partem colit asse Minervam,
Quem sequitur custos Augusta vernula capse:
Eloquio sed uterq; perit orator: utrunq;
Largus & exundans letho dedit ingenii fons:
Ingenio manus est, & cervix casta, nec unquam
Sanguine Causidisi maduerunt nostra pusilli.*

9. But especially forget not, that the number of Nonconformists in England is so great, that it will weary the hangman to dispatch them; or Executioners enow will scarce be found: For what if you hang a Thousand or Eighteen hundred Ministers, you cheat your selves (as you have wilfully long done) if you think that you are ever the nearer your ends: For the people are more averse to your Conformity, than most of the Ministers are; and they are hardlier kept to the rules of Patience and Charity to those that destroy them; and they will chuse Teachers and Pastors out of the best qualified of the people that survive, and will not lay down the worshipping of God according to their consciences, though they were used for it as *Daniel* was, for praying thrice a day openly in his house, contrary to the Law. And these new Pastors perhaps will have less moderation than the old: And thus you will be troubled with a succession of dissenters.

10. And suppose (as it is not improbable) that one half of the people, and some of the Pastors, should be constrained to Conformity, your *Iscariot* hath told you in his *Groans* what they will do: Their judgments would not be changed, but they would only stretch their Consciences to take your Oaths and Subscriptions with their own interpretation, contrary to the plainest sense (as

abundance do who now Conform). And these men will do more against you than the open Nonconformists, being abler to supplant you, as being *nearer* to you ; As the Conformable *Westminster-Assembly* did ; and the Conformable long Parliament ; and, as *Heylin* thinks, *Abbot* and the *Puritan* Bishops and Clergy did by *Laud* and his party :

11. Those that survive (as thousands will do when you have done your worst) will take their first opportunity, to shew their sense of your horrid inhumanity, with far greater animosity, than if you had never tasted blood ; and your cruelties will but be the seed of their fiercer opposition.

12. And there are some hypocrites, no doubt, among those that will suffer by you, who are carried on by a self-conceited zeal : And these may be tempted by your extremities to break out into Treasons, Seditions and Rebellions ; The truly wise and godly will not : But all that are against you, are not such : Nay you your selves, I suppose, think that few of them are such. And if oppression may make a *wise* man mad, no wonder if it make weak foolish people and hypocrites mad : and then you know that one *Felton* may end the Great Duke of *Buckingham*. Because we abhor the thoughts of such villainies, we would not have you lay such temptations on men, as you are not able to bear your selves. If a little worldly wealth and greatness could tempt you to think that you do God service when you kill'd his Servants, why should you think that among many thousands, there will no hypocrites be found, that will break Gods Laws to save themselves by sinful means ? You know how deeply the principle of self-preservation is planted in nature ; and what need there is of considerable grace, to make men patiently resign their lives, when they think they are taken away injuriously. If *Peter* in fear might deny his Master, and all the disciples forsook him and fled, an hypocrite may be tempted to a sinful defence against his persecutors. I do hereby warn all men that they take heed of such temptations, and plead not Nature against the Laws of Grace ; and that they not only live, but dye in honouring their Rulers whatsoever they suffer by them ; and say not as the Poet that lived among Heathenish impatience :

*Ad generum Cereris sine cade & vulnere pauci
Descendant Reges, & sicca morte Tyranni.*

The true fear of God will teach men to live and dye in patience. But while you your selves think that those that you afflict are wicked, and know that cruelty is the most powerful temptation to sinful self-defence, do you think that you will be innocent by such temptations? What if it were felony to cry! Were he innocent that would scourge men, women and children till they bleed, and then call out for Justice against the felons that cryed? Some men will think that your cruelties are of purpose to constrain or tempt some hypocrites into seditious words or deeds, that you may have matter to accuse the rest of. *Rehoboams* young Counsellors, in my opinion, could not justify themselves from the guilt of all the sufferings of that King, by saying, It was the rebellious ten Tribes that did forsake him: It was an unhappy proof of their own Loyalty, to be the Counsellors of so great a temptation. We hate Rebellion and Treason so much more than such as these, that we would not have you say, The King shall have no Loyal Subjects that will not lay down their lives to shew their Loyalty: He that striketh the flint, is guilty of the fire: He that will kill, or banish, or undo men for nothing, to try if he can find any among them all that loveth his life better than his Loyalty or Subjection to Superiors, that he may prick him forward to Sedition by torments, will prove no Loyal Subject himself at last. I remember a person of Quality, more great than good, was reported to assault a Farmers house, to have defiled his daughters: But the door being bolted, and no threats would open them, one of his company bid him throw down the Hive of Bee's in the Garden in revenge: The Bees, when the Hive was broken down, had almost stung the great man and his company to death. If the question was, Whether the owner or the Bees must be accused of the crime? I can only say, that the Counsellor was not innocent. And if a Thief should break into a Bishops house, and bind his Servants, and set a Pistol to the breast of one, and bid him disclose his Lords money, and he should dye rather than be guilty of disclosing it, and all the rest should dye save one, and that one should confess to save his life; I do not think it would be congruous for him that did affright him to it, to say, I am innocent (though perhaps he took not the gold himself); so he that should by cruelties tempt men to such a wicked act as *Felton* or *Card. Betons* executioners used, would not be found the truest friend to Peace or Government.

13. If you say, We will not hang or burn, but banish them : I answer, so were some fugitives exiled in Q. *Maries* days, who yet soon returned to head the *Diocesan* Churches of *England*. And those few of the Clergy that fled from *Cromwell*, returned to see revenge upon Usurpers. And what stricter Laws would you have both for banishment and death, than is made here against the *Romish* Priests? and yet they live in peace among us. Banished men are *alive*, and are *exasperated*; and your guilt will make you think that you are not safe from them till they are dead. *Amesius* at *Frankera* did more service to the Church of God, and more disservice to the *English* *Diocesans*, than *Ames* at *Cambridg* did. Some have banished themselves for an opportunity by writing to do the more against their adversaries, and said,

*Difficile est satyram non scribere : Nam quis iniqua
Tam patiens urbis ? Tam ferreus ut teneat se ?
Si natura negat , facit indignatio versum—
—Quando artibus, inquit, honestis
Nullus in urbe locus, nulla emolumenta laborum ;
Res hodie minor est quam fuit, atque eadem cras
Deteret exiguis aliquid, proponimus illic
Ire fatigatus, ubi Dædalus exiit alas
Dum nova Canisies ; dum prima & recta senectus,
Dum superest Lachesi quod torqueat, & pedibus me
Porto meis, nullo dextram subente bacillo
Cedamus patriâ : Vivant Arturius isthic
Es Catulus : maneat qui nigrum in Candida vertunt.*

I think this much, with what is said in the Propositions, may satisfy men that are willing to understand, that your way will never attain the peace and concord of the Churches, nor in likelihood your own ends ; 1. Either by changing mens judgments. 2. Or bringing them to conformity against their judgments. 3. Or by destroying them. Nay, that it is the most destructive course to all good ends that you can take.

And I may add, that if you should banish them, the worth which they carry with them (as in *Amesius* his instance) will shine where they come; and their honour will be your shame: for men are naturally (and not without cause) inclined to think them to be extreme bad men, by whom men so good, and learned, and

and unblamable, do so much suffer. And methinks you of all men should not be guilty of so much self-denial, as to condemn your Reputation in all other Countreys, and not to care how odious your Names are to others, and to posterity, so be it you hear not their words your selves (of which more anon.)

But here I would insert an humble request to my silenced brethren, that they will study, and pray, and labour so diligently, and live so holily and innocently, that whithersoever they be driven, their light may shine to the glory of their Lord, and the service of his Church; and that they would not disgrace their silencers and afflictors by hard words, but by eminent knowledge and holiness: and they shall find that this splendor of their worth will speak more for them, and against those that hate them, than all our apologies will do.

I will here, to this purpose, cast in a brief History both for your afflictors sake and yours. It is the occasion of the translation of Philosophy from Greece unto the Saracene Arabians, as it is recorded by *Calim August. Curio Histor. Saracen. l. 2.* and out of him by *Hornius Hist. Philos. l. 4. p. 287, 288.* *Mamunus* their Califf, or King, was a great lover of learning; in whose time there was among the Greek Christians one *Leo* a Bishop of *Thessalonica*, who for differing from those in power in the controversy about Images, which then troubled the Churches, was driven from his flock; and coming to *Constantinople*, he lived in a poor cottage privately; but being a most excellent Philosopher, taught many in his private School; so that many excellent Philosophers went out of it in a little time: Among whom one young man was taken prisoner by the *Saracens* in the Wars, who being excellent in *Geometry*, fell into the hands of a great man, by whom his fame was brought to the King; who trying him, and finding him to excel all his Philosophers, must know who was his Master. He told him, one *Leo*, a man that was frowned into obscurity and poverty, but a most excellent Philosopher. The King *Mamunus* was so inflamed with a desire of *Leo*, that he presently wrote to him, and offered him all the Honour and Riches that he could desire, so he would but come to him. *Leo* shewed the Letters to the Emperor at *Constantinople*; whereupon the Emperor not willing that such an honour should pass to his Enemy, gave him License to teach in publick. King *Mamunus* despairing of *Leo*, sendeth important Letters to the Emperor to beg *Leo's* presence but a little

tle while, professing that he would have come with the request himself, but that the Government of a fierce sort of people detained him. Hereupon the Emperor coming to know his worth, and how his own Honour was interess'd in the business, restored *Leo* to his Bishoprick, and had him in great honour, and gave him great Riches. And *Mamumus* not obtaining his desires, wrote many of his difficulties as Questions to *Leo*, and so procured some of his instructions in Writing, by way of answer, to his great satisfaction. And this is noted as the introduction of Learning into that Countrey, which since *Mahometanism* hath famished.

O that we were all such, that our worth might be our apology! and O that those who think it their interest to afflict such, and suppress them, and render them odious to the world, did better understand their own interest, and know on whom the dishonour will redound at last! which I wish not to befall them, but wish them to prevent.

7. If you could procure Uniformity by the means of violence, it must be both got and kept up at dearer rates than the thing is worth.

1. Uniformity must be purchased at the loss of *Unity*. If Violence drive mens bodies nearer together, it will make the heart-separation much wider. Christ hath said, that *by this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another*: but not, By this, if ye all swear obedience to the Bishops, or subscribe that their Writings are infallible; or if ye use the same Liturgy, Cross, or Ceremonies. Our salvation lyeth more on our unity in *Faith* and *Love*, than in our uniformity in things unnecessary. And that is the most prosperous state of the Church, in which mens salvation is most promoted. He that loveth not his brother whom he seeth daily, loveth not God whom he never saw. And he that hateth his brother, is a manslayer; and no manslayer hath eternal life abiding in him; and *violence* and *cruelty* are the great and known destroyers of Love. He that saith as some, *Let them hate, so they fear*; doth shew that he hateth God and man, and will prove the greatest hater of himself at last.

2. You will wrong the King and Kingdom by depopulation, and weaken it so, that it may become not only the scorn of our common enemies, but their prey. For ought I can discern, you that have despised my predictions of that kind, have encreased the number already manifold of those that dislike you and your way.
And

And if your self-conceitedness and unskilfulness shall first make most of the Kings subjects distast you, and then your cruelty shall suggest that they must be punished till they love you, or be destroyed for disliking you, this will be but like the work of unhappy Surgeons, that must cut off the limb, because they have themselves made the wound incurable. Believe it, the hanging or banishing of a few hundreds or thousands, will not do your business, but make it worse (I told you so long ago as to silencing, and you would not believe it) ; nay, it will make it incomparably worse : And if you banish or kill all that are against you, Land will be very cheap, and Houses cheaper ; and others will call that *Solitude*, which you call *concord*, *uniformity*, and *peace*. And our unity will be like theirs in *Moldavia* and *Wallachia*. And who shall compensate the Kings damage ?

3. And Foreign Churches and posterity will be brought by it to so great a hatred of *Prelacy*, that they will never be reconciled to it more, but prefer a poor and humble Ministry. And indeed it is already so known by its fruits, that I am much in doubt, the experience of it will alienate the people from that Primitive lawful Episcopacy which I would have them to desire. They say already, Give us the old, honest, humble, serious Puritans, that lived not upon Gold and Worldly greatness, and cherished not mens sins, that they might cherish them.

*Fructus vocibus obscenis omniq; libidinis arte,
Qui Lacedemonium Pytismate lubricat orbem,
Namq; ibi fortuna veniam damus (alea turpis,
Turpe & adulterium mediocribus) : hac eodem illi.
Omnia cum faciant Hilaros, nitidq; vocantur. Juv.*

I suppose you know how much it alienateth men from Popery, that their Religion must be fed, and live by blood ; yea by precious blood. Some of you have written your wishes, that the course had been followed, which was begun in the days of *Whiggist* and *Bancroft*, when divers Nonconformists were hanged : And some have written, that it was not for Religion, but for Treason. As for *Hacket* and *Coppinger*, it's known they were crackt-brain'd men, pretending to be sent to judge the World, whom the Nonconformists condemned : which *Bancroft* himself in part confesseth. And whereas Dr. *Sutcliffe* conjectured that *Carrwright* was privy to

all: Mr. *Simson Ash* gave me a Manuscript, supposed to be Mr. *Cartwrights* own writing, fully confuting that accusation.

And as for the rest, it's true that the Bishops then laboured by exposition of a Law to make Treason by consequence of that which was spoken against themselves: But it will be long ere the confutation of that is well answered, which is written by some one learned in the Law, called, *A Petition to her Majesty, &c.*

And what the same Author saith (Pag. 25.) of that Pious man Mr. *Udal*, will by others (and perhaps one day by your consciences) be thought on with respect to the 2000 silenced Ministers of late, and the many that have dyed in and by imprisonment, and much more of so many, as if you prosecute what you have begun, you must destroy.

His words are, *That the Bishops should be so unnatural as to seek the life of a right, godly and faithful Preacher of the Gospel, I mean Mr. Udal, to whom Life was offered if he would take his Oath, that he did not make a book whereof he was supposed to be Author. A rare example; that a man should be known standing at a bar, shackled in bolts (but quære quo jure?) and coupled with a murderer, whose conscience was thought so faithful and sound by the Judge himself, that he would not swear falsely to gain his life. (He had not learnt some mens rules for expounding Oaths): Nor loved his life so well as some men do a Benefice). But were no worse men suffered?*

8. You may have all that is truly desirable, and to be expected in this world, as necessary to Unity and Concord, to Order and Decency, and to your own honour, accomplished ten thousand times easilier, surer and better, by obvious, honest, lawful means.

God never putteth men upon such bloody and desperate courses as some advise: It is no necessity of Gods making that is pleaded for such means, but of their own sinful making, or false imagining. God never wanteth lyes or cruelty to his service or glory. They are usually wicked selfish ends (whatever is pretended), for which men chuse and use such means: Or if the ends were never so good, they will not justifie such means; nay good ends will condemne them as contrary, incongruous, and destructive. But when there are easie, suitable and honest means enow at hand, the choice of such as are forementioned, bescemeth none but those whose design is to destroy.

If you say, *What he these means?* They are easily told you; but your little self-interests will not give you leave to think them tolerable. I shall tell you more particularly anon. I will now speak but of the generals.

Quest. 1. What if you would learn of the Holy Ghost to impose no other than *Necessary things*? Act. 15. What if you had the patience to endure the Apostolick Primitive way of Discipline and Worship, and suffered men to go to Heaven in the same way as the Apostles and Christians of those times did? What if you kept all that *Wisdom* to your selves, in which you excel the Apostles, and put no more upon the Churches than they did? Would the inconveniences of this weigh down the mischiefs which are now upon the Churches throughout the world by the contrary course? Let not your passion make you run away with a conceit of an intolerable conclusion, and say I would reduce you to the *Primitive poverty or persecution*: No, I talk not of matters extrinick to *Discipline and Worship* (for *faith* we will yet suppose we are agreed in), I suppose you think not that Poverty or Riches are parts of the instituted worship of God. I am as far from expecting that you should consent to be as *poor* and *persecuted* as the Apostles, as that you should be as *good* as the Apostles. Those that you have to do with, believe that the Scripture hath more exactly determined how God will be worshipped, than *how much a year* shall be the Revenues of a Bishop. We meddle not with your Lands or Lordships (whatever our own opinion be of such matters): Though we are not ambitious of your higher and wealthier condition, yet we neither envy it, nor think it our duty to diminish your wealth. But the question is, If you let men worship God, without any more yokes or burdens than Christ and his Apostles laid upon the Churches, what *harm* would it do? Did they then want any needful *uniformity*? Did they not pray decently without a Surplice? Did they not baptize decently without the Cross? If you say, that *they had their rites of decency then, though not the same that we have now*: I answer, Impose no other than they imposed: Leave those free which they left free. Though you think your own to be better than theirs, so do not all Christians: If it be mens *infirmity* to think that the Scripture-rites are better than yours, yet what harm will it do you to bear with that infirmity? What if you required no more Oaths of obedience to the Bishops, than the Apostles required to themselves, or to any Pastors of the Church? What if

you required no Subscription to any thing as certain truth, but only to the infallible Oracles of the Spirit? Nay the Apostles required not any to subscribe to all the books of Sacred Scripture, but only to receive them in general as the Doctrine of Christ and the Holy Ghost; and they culled out the few necessary Articles of the faith, as the matter of a necessary particular profession. I will tell you what *good* these things will do, and do you tell me what *harm* they will do, and let the *good* and *harm* be well compared.

1. It would either *Unite all Christians*, or make their Union an easie thing, as soon as the minds of men were prepared for it. All Christians are agreed that the *Holy Scriptures are infallible*; All Christians are not agreed that *your three books* are infallible: Therefore all Christians may easilier unite in their subscription or belief of the Scriptures, than of your three books.

Perhaps you will say, that it *will not unite us with the Papists, nor with any that require more*. I answer, We shall be so far united, as that they will approve of all our Religion, though we approve not of all theirs? For they confess the truth of all our *Canonical Scriptures*; and confess that all things universally necessary to salvation are contained in them (and much more): So *Bellarmino*, *Costerus*, and many others, and especially the old Schoolmen freely assert. And it is a great advance to Concord, and to our satisfaction, to have the common concession of all Christians, that *our Religion is all true*, and *nothing of absolute necessity wanting*. But I have spoken more to this before; to which I refer you.

2. It would make it as easie for any Protestant to justify all his Religion, as it is to justify the sacred Scriptures, to those that confess them to be true; and so to tell the Papist *where our Religion hath been in all ages, and what succession our Church hath had*.

3. It would take none of your forms or ceremonies, or super-additions, from any that will needs have them: while you make them not the necessary terms of union and communion, he that will may be without them.

4. Christian love, and saving unity and concord, may be thus maintained by mutual forbearance, while nothing is done contrary to the nature of love, to mortifie it. And if any would take occasion by differences to revile and villifie one another, the Magistrate may have the approbation of all sober men, in keeping the peace, and punishing all the fruits of such uncharitableness that tend to the destruction of love or godliness.

5. A thousand unhappy crimes will be prevented, which will follow the death of Christian love, and the exasperation of mens passions and tongues by their sufferings.

6. The Pastors when they grow like to Christ in meekness, gentleness, and love, will be loved and honoured by the flocks, and the name of a Bishop will not be odious any more; and consequently the lives of faithful Pastors will be more comfortable.

7. And then the doctrine and labours of Ministers will be more succesful, and consequently piety and justice will increase, and multitudes more will be sanctified and saved.

8. It will be a comfort to the King and Magistrates to be loved, honoured, and obeyed, by an united willing people, and to be excused from the unpleasing works of fining, imprisoning, banishing, or hanging their subjects for differing from them about some cases of sin and duty, when the fear of offending the God of heaven is that which bringeth them to their sufferings.

9. It will be a great strength and beauty to the State, and Church, and fortifie us against a common Enemy, and end our fears of Sedition on account of Religion at home.

10. In a word, it would make us liker to the primitive believers, and lead the way to all Christian States and Churches, for the right reconciling of all the Christian World.

And what now is the *hurt* that these *Scripture primitive* terms would bring?

Obj. It would make as many factions as there be different Opinions or Ceremonies.

Ans. 1. Do you judge of others by your selves? Are all men so proud and void of humanity and love, that they must needs be *factions* if they do but differ in an opinion or ceremony from others? or that they cannot live in love and peace with any that differ from them in an opinion or ceremony? or that they can endure to see none live at liberty out of Gaols, that be not in all such things of their mind? 2. If there be any such proud and uncharitable persons, the Magistrate may curb the expressions of their folly, that it wrong not others. 3. If that were true, there would be as many *Factions* as men (if you will pardon your contradiction): for all men differ in opinion from each other, and in as great matters of Religion as a Ceremony. 4. Doth the differences forementioned among your selves (as between Dr. Taylor, Mr. Thorndike, and some others, from the Doctrine of the Church

Church of *England*) make any such Factions among you? Did the difference mentioned by *Heylin* between Bishop *Mountague* and *Wren*, about coming up to the Altar to communicate, make any factions? Doth the difference now between your *Arminians* and *Calvinists*, which we ordinarily hear in your own Pulpits, make such Factions? Doth the different modes of Cathedral and Parish-worship, make such Factions? If not, why should it make a Faction for one man to cross a child in Baptism, and another not? Do not the very *Papists* keep up their unity and strength, by allowing far more and greater diversities in Doctrines, and in Religious Orders, Rules, and Ceremonies, according as every Order hath desired?

Obj. But if any be allowed to forbear, those that use the ceremonies or subscriptions will be censured by the followers of the Nonconformists.

Ans. And is it indeed to preserve your honour, that we must undergo all these convulsions? Speak it out then plainly, that the world may understand you. Must all that differ in a ceremony from you, be silenced and hunted about the world, lest the people should think worse of you than of them? 2. But how notoriously do bad means overthrow the ends of them that use them? It is Honours Motto, *Quod sequitur fugio, quod fugit ipse sequor*. Do not the people know that we differ from you in these things, as much when we are silenced, as when we preach? Will imprisonment or banishment make us agreed, or make the people think we are agreed? Or will they forget all the difference, think you, when we are out of sight? If the bare different opinion and practice make them undervalue you, will not they think worse of you when they think you do worse? Will they not distast a Conformable man, whom they judg an envious persecutor, more than a Conformable man whom they judg a meek and loving man? One would think that you should need no answer to such objections. But I have answered enow before.

2. Well! if the *Scripture simplicity* be too narrow for you, my next question is, What harm will it do you to unite on such terms as all the Churches did unite in, in the days of *Tertullian* and *Cyprian*, yea for 300. years after the birth of Christ? Look whatever was then the terms of the Churches union and communion,
and

and we shall not be unthankful to you, if you will make that, and only that to be so now. I do not say, that you should make *all that necessary* which was then used on terms of liberty and indifferency; they had then their *necessaries* for union, and their *unnecessaries*, which were used at liberty as every Church saw good. Impose no more than they imposed; no more of Liturgy, no more of Ceremony, no more Subscriptions, Promises, or Oaths, and it will heal us all. Impose Liturgy no further than they then did (which at the most was but every Bishop on a particular Church that was united for personal (not representative) communion, and was no bigger than one of our Parishes for number of souls). If these terms will not serve you neither, you shall not with us have the reputation of the best friends of Antiquity, Unity, Love or Peace.

Q. 3. What harm would it do, if the Churches were healed by such means as all the most grave, experienced Conciliators have pitched upon as the only way, at least in all the Protestant Churches? We are contented with *Lerinenfis* terms, *Quod ab omnibus, ubiq; & semper receptum est*. All the famous reconcilers of the last age and this, *Acontius*, *Melancthon*, *Pelargus*, *Durau*, *Calixtus*, *Lud. Crocius*, *Joh. Bergius*, *Conradus Bergius*, *Junius*, *Parau*, *Hottonus*, *Amyaldus*, *Usher*, *Morton*, *Hall*, *Davenant*, *Chillingworth*, *Hales*, *Bucer*, *Burroughs*, *Stillingsfleet*, and every man that ever wrote a rational *Irenicon*, conspire in this one necessary means, the forbearing all imposition of doubtful unnecessary things, as necessary to actual unity and communion, and the centering and cementing all on the terms of the few certain, great, and necessary things which we are commonly agreed in; or as *Rupertus Meldenis* his oft-cited words are, *In necessariis, unitas, in non-necessariis libertas; in utriq; charitas*. Do you think verily that all these were mistaken? and that you are wiser than they who have studied the art of peace as much as you have done the arts of victory, and getting down those whom you first make, and then call your adversaries? I know you will still say, *These are good terms for our union with neighbour churches, but not for our church within it self*. To which I have answered you already; and now add, 1. Every company of Christians associated for personal communion in Gods publick Worship (as distinct from distant communion in Spirit only, and from communion by Delegates or Representatives) is a true particular church, taking Pastors and people to be the parts thus associated. Every such Church had

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and we shall not be unthankful to you, if you will make that, and only that to be so now. I do not say, that you should make *all that necessary* which was then used on terms of *liberty* and *indifferency*; they had then their *necessaries* for *union*, and their *unnecessaries*, which were used at liberty as every Church saw good. Impose no more than they imposed; no more of Liturgy, no more of Ceremony, no more Subscriptions, Promises, or Oaths, and it will heal us all. Impose Liturgy no further than they then did (which at the most was but every Bishop on a particular Church that was united for personal (not representative) communion, and was no bigger than one of our Parishes for number of souls). If these terms will not serve you neither, you shall not with us have the reputation of the best friends of Antiquity, Unity, Love or Peace.

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had a Bishop in Scripture-times, as Dr. Hammond in his Annot. will tell you over and over ; and in Ignatius his time too ; For he saith, That to every Church there was one Altar, and one Bishop, with his fellow Presbyters and Deacons. And this one Altar (which shewed only one place of meeting for ordinary publick Communion), and one Bishop, were the notes of Unity to every one Church, as Mr. Mede also fully openeth it. And Dr. Hammond will further bear witness what every Bishop with his Church is, in 1 Tim. 3. *And such all the particular Churches of the whole world, considered together, under the Supreme Head Christ Jesus, dispensing them all by himself, and administering them severally, not by one Oeconomus, but by the several Bishops, as inferior Heads of Unity to the several bodies, so constituted by the several Apostles in their plantations, each of them having an *ἐκκλησία*, a several distinct commission from Christ immediately, and subordinate to none but the Supreme Donor or Plenipotentiary*—And before, so was every such regular Assembly of Christians under a Bishop, an Oeconomus set over by Christ (the house of God)—Mark all this then, and let your Impositions be measured by this Rule ; so that either you will have the many Churches in one Kingdom, to be united on terms of Regiment, or only on terms of Concord. On the terms of the extrinseck accidental Regiment, we grant that all the Kings Subjects are united, and that he hath power *circa sacra* : But so you might have said of all the Roman Empire ; And so if the Christian part of the World had all one Monarchy, your own Concession must be overthrown (that neighbour Churches must unite on necessary terms, leaving *indifferens* ones to liberty) ; or else you will see that the case of the Catholick Church, under such an Empire, would be the same with a National Church under one King : And our Churches are as much to be accounted Neighbour-Churches, as those in such an Empire would be. But if you speak of one *Essential, Constitutive, Ecclesiastical Head and Governour*, we know none such, any more than one Pope. Therefore it must be an Union of Concord, by which you call many Churches in a Nation *one* (or an extrinseck accidental Union). And consequently it is an improper speech, because it is not *locutio formalis, sed accidentalis* ; for the form denominateth. We being therefore *One Church* but *Accidentally* (by one King, and by Concord, as several agreeing Churches may be called), it followeth that we must hold our Concord accordingly, with those at home, as well as with those abroad, upon terms of equal charity and liberty, (except

(except what the King will take away). For as for *Councils*, even *General* ones (much more *Provincial*, it is not Bishop *Ushers* opinion only, but ordinary with Protestants, that they are to the particular Bishops not *directly Regimental*, but means of *Agreement*. Mark your Bishop *Bilsons* words of Christ. Subject. pag. 229. *To Councils, such as the Church of Christ was wont by her Religious Princes to call, we owe communion and brotherly concord, so long as they make no breach in faith, nor in Christian charity: Subjection and servitude we owe them none: The blessed Angels profess themselves to be fellow-servants of the Saints on earth, Rev. 22. What are you then, that wish your tribunals and jurisdictions would be Lords and Rulers over Christs inheritance?*

2. The same Reasons which require you to agree only on *necessary* terms with *foreign Churches*, will oblige you to the like course at *home*. The judgments of *Natives* are of the same temper, and their differences will be as *certain* and *constant*, and your charity to them should be no *less* than to strangers. Only this we all confess, 1. That all the Churches must agree in their subjection to the same King. 2. And every particular Church must agree with their particular Pastors in the exercises of Communion. 3. And that Concord in one *Translation*, one *Meeter*, and such like is desirable, not so much because we are under one King, as because we are neighbours, and of one language, and would be desirable if we were of several Kingdoms, in the same propinquity: But it is not to be procured at a price which is above its worth.

3. When you profess Concord with the foreign Churches, upon Catholick terms, and deny the same to the Churches that are under one King, you do plainly tell them how little they are beholden to you for their peace; and that it is, because you have not power to take it from them, which you would do if you could.

4. You greatly injure Christian Monarchs, while you would make the world believe that they are the great adversaries of the Churches peace and unity; For it is not only from the *Will* of their several Princes, that several Churches must unite only on Catholick terms, or not at all: but it is from the impossibility that all the Christian World should ever come in all things controvertible and indifferent to be of one opinion, any more than to be of one stature and complexion: And now you come and tell them, that if they had all one Emperor, they must all agree upon all the controvertible

and indifferent things, which Canons and Laws should impose upon them, or else their Ministers be forbidden to preach Christs Gospel to the people, and the Churches forbidden to meet and worship God; yea, prisons and other penalties shall constrain them. And what a temptation is this to men that know the wonderful variety of humane temperaments, educations, advantages, apprehensions, that is, who know what it is to be a mortal man, and a weak Christian, to pray against the largeness of Empire, and to dread it as the most certain Engine to wrack the Churches in pieces, and to silence, imprison, unchurch and distress the Christian Ministers and Churches.

To conclude this reason, *Take away but your Imposition of the few things controverted, and leave the particular Churches free in things confessed indifferent by your selves, and we are then all one,* and the quarrel at an end. And a little love to Christ, to the Gospel, and the Souls of men, would tell a disinterested person, whether the fruits of that Concord, or the fruits of our present Uniformity in those Subscriptions, Oaths and Ceremonies, would be the better; and which is the more lovely and beautiful state of the Church.

9. The different estimation which the two Parties have of the things imposed, doth make your violence notoriously unequal in the sight of any equal Judges. You call the Impositions (antecedently) *Things indifferent*. The Nonconformists do not so, but take them for such heinous sins, that they dare scarce denominate them to you, lest while they do but tell you their own reasons for avoiding them, they be thought to make you, or, the imposers odious, by their censures. So that they are fain to suppose their judgments to be *scruples*, and themselves to be the *weak Christians*, and bring all under that name of *Tenderness of Conscience*, lest if they should tell you that they are strongly perswaded, that if they should Conform (not meddling with any others), it would be in them no less than owning the Perjury of many thousands, and a publick Ministerial renunciation of a needful Reformation, and a promising to God, or declaring before all the people that we will not obey him, nor repent and amend what is amiss in our places; and an owning of all the Usurpations and abuses committed by many others, and a publick lying on deliberation, declaring, that we assent and consent to more than we do indeed, or can do, and a justify-

justifying of all the failings in that worship which is thus prescribed (when we dare not justify the best prayer that ever we put up to God in all things), and an offering to God a worship which we cannot in faith be assured that he accepteth, &c. These are the Names of their fears, which they dare scarce utter, lest the incarnate Accusers of the brethren cry out, They make us all perjured, and publick rebels against God, and they make our Rulers the Imposers of such things: (But the day is coming when it will be proved an unhappy artifice to stop the mouth of innocencies defence, by making the crime imposed (in their judgments) so great, that it shall not be judged a thing sufferable to name it).

But if you believe that ever there will be a judgment where equity shall be of any regard, methinks you should see, that *quoad hoc* their end of the ballance much weigheth down yours; and that the opinion of *Indifferency* should yield to the opinion of *so desperate a danger*. If you prove it the right, yet you confess, that God may be worshipped decently in a comely Gown, without a Surplice, and that a Child may *orderly* and *decently* be baptized, without the transient Image of a Cross appointed to a dedicating half-sacramental use; and that a man may acceptably worship God, that cannot subscribe that your three books are Infallible to a word, &c. But if it should prove that the Nonconformist is in the right, Aggravated Perjury, deliberate lying, rebellious profession of disobedience to God, owning great and publick sins, corrupting holy worship, &c. are more tremendous matters than a thing indifferent: Let any then besides your selves be judges, whether not yielding and complying be the heinous crime in them or you?

If you say, that [By this rule we must abate the Imposition of things indifferent to all that will but be so erroneous as to account them heinous sins]. I answer, 1. If you did do so, it were but the doing according to the Wisdom of the Holy Ghost and the Apostles. *Acts 15.* to impose nothing but *necessary things*: And to do as *Paul* did, that would forbear eating flesh while he lived, rather than the weak should be offended or scandalized. 2. But whether there be no more reason of the Nonconformists dissent and fears, than what such silly scrupulosity as you intimate may suggest, have patience till we come to the particulars, and we shall tell you, if you can endure to hear it.

10. The Argument from real *scandal* in this matter, is of greater force than you seem to take notice of : We fear that we shall do much to make our hearers infidels, impenitent, or utterly debauched, and to make all our Ministerial labours a vain and fruitless thing to them, if we should Conform.

We still tell you that we are not accusing the Lawmakers or you ; but telling you what we fear it would be in us, if we should do it. You see here that we plead not against the meer *displeasing* of our Hearers, but the *darning* of them ; nor for the preservation of our *own interest* in them, but for the preservation and salvation of themselves. And is this kind of *scandal*, think you, which consisteth in tempting, ensnaring and damning men, regardable or not ? Had *Paul* a *soft head*, in having so *soft a conscience* in this point ? We were never Apprentices to the Butchers trade, but to the Physicians : It is not with us a thing indifferent, to send Souls, as much as in us lieth, to Hell. You shall hear the reason of our fears.

Our Calling is to save men from sin (without which we cannot save them from Hell) : Were it not for this end, we had nothing to say to you ; no request to make to you ; nor would we stoop to be beholden to you for our Ministerial liberties. Many of us can live otherwise ; and if we live as Ministers, it hath been in the days of our liberty with many of us, more to *give* than *receive* : And we have too much of the suggestions of the flesh, which would be glad if we might cast off the burden which you take from us, and would take our Silencers for our greatest friends. But the Spirit of God hath taught us yet to prefer things spiritual and eternal, for our selves and others : He that said, *Ye are our Crown and our rejoicing, &c.* And now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord ; and I count not my life dear, that I may finish my course with joy, and the Ministry given me, &c. shall be our pattern as far as we can imitate him. The saving of the people from their sins, was Christs work, and must be ours.

And we fear that we shall perswade them to all sin and villany if we conform ; For, first, the sins which we fear being guilty of, are as great as almost any that ever we shall preach against in them.

2. Our owning and justification of them will be as notorious as most ways that we could devise to do it : For, 1. it must be Deliberate.

berate. 2. Publick. 3. Ministerially. 4. Perseveringly: And therefore sure *Impenitently*.

1. A man in a *passion*, or by a surprise, or *inconsiderately*, may lie, or speak an unjust thing: But when a man is *called* to do it, to study the case, and to do it upon mature deliberation, doth shew more of the habitual temper of the will.

2. A man that is *secretly perjured*, or *false*, destroyeth himself: But he that *openly* both *practiseth* it, and *professeth* and *justifieth* it, doth his worst to destroy the hearers and beholders.

3. If a Minister preach sound doctrine, and in his life be a drunkard, fornicator, or the like, I will hear him in case I can have no better, because his sin is *Personal*, and not *Ministerial*: But if in the open Church, as a Minister, he will *declare* that to drink away a mans reason is no drunkenness or sin, and to use forbidden congress is no fornication or sin, &c. This is a *heresie*, and a Ministerial wickedness, that is not so easily to be born.

4. If a man commit a fault in his drunkenness or passion, and after repent of it, God will pardon it, and so may we: But if a man publickly persevere both in the *committing* and *justifying* heinous sin, and live by it in the world, yea and entitle God to it, and say he doth it for his service—Blame us not to fear such things as these.

Now the sins which we fear being of the greatest sort that Hell suggesteth, Perjury, and owning the Perjury of thousands, and doing that which is equivalent to the preaching of Impenitency to them, and say Repent not, for I declare that it is no sin; and *lying* deliberately; and making a publick Ministerial profession of Ulurpation and Church-Corruption, and of our resolution never to obey God in doing any duty of ours in order to a reformation; and other such like; I say these being the sins we fear, what can we think less than that the fornicators, drunkards, swearers, thieves, &c. that hear us should say, Is ours a sin, and is Ministerial Perjury, &c. none? What an hypocrite is this wretch, to talk against Lying and Swearing, with a deliberate Lying, Perjured tongue, and to consent to be a publick, ministerial, professed, impenitent Lyar, and Perjured, on condition that he may have leave to serve God in perswading us from Lying, Swearing, and other sins? Shall we believe his Sermons, or his profession and practice? Or can we believe that he believeth himself? What doth he mean by talking against sin? Is there any sin much greater than that
which,

which he listeth himself a defender and practiser of? And are we like to win Souls on such terms as these? yea, or can we expect that God should bless our labours, when we offer him Lying, Perjury, &c. for a sacrifice, and so blaspheme him? as interpretatively, to say, *I deliberately commit these sins against thee, and will declare them to the Congregation to be no sins, that so I may have leave to Preach against sin.* This is the scandal which we fear, and plead against.

11. It is the work of your own calling, and your Ministerial interest, to cherish a true *fear of sinning* in the people: And if you will prosecute them with Imprisonments or Excommunications, and Violence, who are come to so much regard of your doctrines, as to fear sin (if you think there be any error in the materials), what could you do more to contradict your preaching and office, and destroy that which is or should be your end: Especially, if withall, you do, as it were, proclaim, [He that will do all these things that we bid him do, and will not fear lest he incur any guilt of perjury, lying, professed disobedience to God, &c. in so doing, shall be capable of Church-preferment].

If you go this violent imposing way to work, whether you can see it or not, men that stand out of the dust can see, that there are but these ways to scape your punishment and censures: 1. Either to be so perfect in understanding, as to know in all things, what is lawful, and what not: And that is an impossible way, because the generality of subjects will never possibly be brought to that perfection: Nay if they were, it would be the way to their certain suffering and ruine. For it is most certain that you your selves have not attained this perfection, and therefore are still fallible; and when you your selves take any one *sin* for a *thing indifferent*, if the subjects know it to be *sin*, they must fall under the punishment of your imposing Domination. 2. Or else they must be men that believe nothing to be sin (which is the case of all that believe there is no God), and so dare do any thing to save their flesh: And this way will make all the world conformable to you, that are under your power. 3. Or else they must be such as believe that nothing is sin which you or their Rulers shall command them (As all do, who believe that you are Gods, or above God, and consequently indeed that there is no God); Or that believe that God hath made men absolute Rulers of the peoples Souls,

Souls, and put Heaven and Hell into their power. Can you imagine how very many others should ever be exact Conformists to your imposing wills universally. If a few individuals should chance to be in all points of your judgments, indeed (which must be a rare case) it cannot be expected to be so with many, much less with all.

And if your interest should lead you to debauch the people, and take away all fear of sinning, by forcing them on that which is so feared, you would find your own interest cross'd at last: For it is the *godly* or the *superstitious* people that must long keep up your reverence and honour: We see by daily experience, that the Atheists and Infidels, and professedly impious ones, deride you behind your backs, and come very seldom to the publick Assemblies. Your Assemblies are more made up of such as dislike your proceedings, than of these that are brought beyond all fear of sin or punishment.

12. The Preachers whom you silence would do you less hurt in their permitted publick Ministry, than they do now, or will do when you have done your worst.

In publick, 1. Your friends and multitudes of several sorts will be their hearers, and witness against them for every word that they say amiss. But in secret they may take more liberty to oppose your way, if they affect so doing. 2. Your kindness, and their own and the Churches interest, will more oblige them to forbear you when they have publick liberty, than when you prosecute them as foes. 3. And the very Assemblies of men separated by expulsion and violence, doth seem to invite all the people to a sense of the cause thereof, which a liberty of such meetings without danger and unkindness would not do. 4. And if you keep them from Assemblies, they will make the *deeper* impressions on the people, in the families and secret converse which they use. 5. Or if you banish, imprison, or hang them, their sufferings will do far more against you, than all their preaching. I am assured that it is you that advance the reputation of many *Nonconformists*, and arm them thereby against your selves. The truth is, though they are commonly the most hearty, serious, feeling Preachers, yet some of them are weaker as to the congruity of expression, than the Debate-maker, or the *young Politician*. But when the people see them true to their consciences, they value them much more than they

they would have done if you had let them alone. Whether you like it or not, so it is, and so it will be. Therefore it is you that fight against your selves.

13. You take the way to make your Church an unknown thing. None are to be reckoned for Christians and Church-members, but voluntary professors of it. *Coacti non est consensus.* And as Protestants tell the Papists, They may know who come within their Temples, but they never know who are members of their Church, because they know not who professeth voluntary consent, and who doth it involuntary by meer constraint. And so it may be said of others that go their way.

14. By the course fore-described, you will have a Church so corrupted, as will be a continual temptation to the most religious sort to distaste it, if not to separate from it. When men that fear sin are the suffering side; and fearfulness of sin, and a conscience that can do any thing, is full security from all those penalties, it is easie to foresee what sort of people you will make your *friends*, (who will do you more harm than good) and what sort will be more and more alienated from you. And then the zealous sort of Ministers and people will from age to age be the sharp reproachers of your vices. And then that will encrease your enmity against them! And what will this come to at last?

I will give you but two instances now to calm you. *Gildas* our ancient *Britain*, hath so characterized the *British* Clergy, even in those elder and less tempted times, that he doubteth not to call them *Wolves* and not *Pastors*; and plainly to profess, that he that *took them for Ministers or Pastors*, was not *eximius Christianus*, one of the more excellent sort of Christians. What could a Separatist have said more of you? And yet you can *praise Gildas* (for it is not in your power to eclipse his glory) and not endure the same words from any one that is near you. The other is that oft mentioned instance of *St. Martin*, who would not come to their Synods, nor communicate at all with *Ithacius*, *Idacius*, and the rest of the Prelates of the Synods and Countrey about him, though of the very same belief, because by their *cruel ungodly* prosecution of the *Priscillian Hereticks*, they had taught the world the way of violence in matters of Religion, and had made the *strictest Religious people* every where brought under the malignant suspicion

of being *Priscillianists*: so that having but once for the saving of a condemned mans life, communicated with the Bishops (being a Bishop himself) at the perswasion of the Emperor *Maximus*, he was, as he professeth, sharply rebuked for it by an Angel in a Vision, and would communicate with them no more. And what worse do the Separatists do by you, as to communion? And yet *Sulpit. Severus* tells you by what abundance of Miracles *Martins* credibility was confirmed.

Hear a little of the story from your own *Hooker*, with his application, judge you to whom. *I deny not but that our Antagonists in these controversies may peradventure have met with some, not unlike to Ithacius, who mightily bending himself by all means against the Heresie of Priscillian, (the hatred of which one evil was all the virtue he had) became so wise in the end, that every man careful of virtuous conversations, studious of Scripture, and given to any abstinence in diet, was set down in his Character for suspected Priscillianists: For whom it should be expedient to approve their soundness of faith, by a more licentious and loose behaviour: such Protectors and Patrons the truth may spare.* Can you endure these words of *Hooker*? (too short a scrap of that notable history) and can you mark them, and learn by them to know your party, and to foresee the end, and perceive what service such do the Church? Nonconformists think that this is too like our present case.

15. Sword-severities, as coming from the instigations of the Clergy, do abundance more harm, than if they came from the Magistrate alone. Experience telleth us, that they have ever made the Clergy much more odious than the Magistrate: Because the Sword is the Magistrates weapon: And if he err in using it, it doth the less abate mens respect to his person, because it is but the misdoing of his proper work: Or if he drive men into hard thoughts of his person, it hath not much influence on the honour of Religion. But Ministers have nothing to do with the Sword: Their office is exercised by Gods Word alone, and that is the only weapon with which they are to strike offenders. And their office being only to govern by *Light* and *Love*, the people cannot bear that from them which they do from Magistrates: It seemeth a monstrous and horrible usurpation to them. And if the Clergy will play the hypocrites, as the Papists do, and say, We do not meddle with the Sword, but only deliver them up to the Secular

power to be punished, when they tell the Secular power that it is their *duy*, and drive them on to it, with the threats of Excommunication or Damnation: this will never reconcile the people to their cruelties. Of all beasts, they love not sheep that have bloody teeth and fangs; nor of all birds, a Dove, that liveth like the Hawks, on flesh.

And when the Clergy are once made hateful to them, I have told you that the scandal tendeth to make them think hardly of their doctrine, and at least to run into some contrary extream, if not to dislike Religion it self. I have seldom observed any extream in Hereticks or Schismatics, which was not notably caused by the Clergies contrary extream. *Annominianism* rose among us from our obscure Preaching of Evangelical Grace, and insisting too much on tears and terrors. *Arminianism* rose from mens prophane abuse of the Doctrine of Election, saying, If I am elected, I shall be saved, whatever I do; and when God will give me grace, I shall have it; and till then, it is not in him that willett or runneth. The *Quakers* arose from the pride and vanity of Religious people, from which they fled into the sordid extream. And *Separatists* have almost always risen from the ignorance, ungodliness, the shameful disabilities, idle negligence, pride, covetousness, or cruelty of the Clergy. This is true, as the experience of all ages telleth us. The insufficient and naughty Clergy make *Separatists*. At this day the superstitious think they can scarce go too far from men that they account so ungodly, malignant and cruel: And the ungodly, and infidel, and cruel sort of men, do think they can scarce go too far from the superstitious. If you would read and learn of such reprovers, as *Gildas*, and *Salvian*, and *Nazianzen*, and *Hilary*, and *Alvarus Pelagius* *Planch. Eccles.* and *Acontius*, and such like, you need not have so many thousands flying from your Churches, as from an house on fire, or infected with the Plague; nor reporting your Crimes, as the Parliament-Centuries, or the *Gloucester-Cobler*, or your groaning *Scabod* have done.

16. You should rather help to cure the prejudice that the world hath against the Clergy, as envious, selfish, and cruel, than encrease it. The World already thinketh that the Clergy are so *covetous*, *proud* and *envious*, that they can endure no man that standeth in their light; but like the great dog, that hath got the
carrion,

carriage, snarl at every little dog that looketh at them, suspecting they come to take some from him: It is their common opinion, that the Clergy are the incendiaries and troublers of the world; And that the worst Princes left to themselves, are not half so cruel against the faithful Preachers and Practisers of Christianity, as the proud and covetous Clergy are. It is therefore your duty not to confirm the world in this opinion, by seeming as envious and cruel as others have been; but to cure it by love, and tenderness, and self-denial.

17. Have you ever considered and regarded, whether the Apostles ever took your course? You say your selves, that they had power to give men over to the Devil for Corporal punishment: And yet when did they ever do so by any but desperate Infidels, (as *Elymas*) or desperate Hereticks, that denied fundamentals, as *Alexander*, *Hymenaeus* and *Philetus*? Or whom did they so much as threaten Church-sharpness to, else, unless it were such a proud domineering Bishop as *Diotrephes*, who would neither receive some brethren, nor permit others to do it, but cast them out of the Church, prating with malicious words against the Apostle. *Paul* blamed *Mark*, but did not silence him. He fell out with *Barnabas* to a parting, but did not hinder him from preaching the Gospel. He blameth *Demas* for forsaking him, and loving the world, and many more for forsaking him, when he appeared before *Nero*, and elsewhere, *They all mind their own things, and not the things that are Jesus Christs*: And yet he silenced none of them that preached the same Gospel which he did: He met with some Preachers so bad, that they *Preached Christ of envy and strife, of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to his bonds*: What then? *Notwithstanding every way, whether in contention or in truth, Christ was preached, and he therein rejoiced, and resolved to rejoyce*, and not to silence them, *Phil. 1. 15, 16, 17, 18*. Some indeed that preached the Law, and, as it were, another Gospel, he saith must have *their mouths stopped*; but none that preached the same Gospel; nor *they*, by the Sword, but by the convincing Word. He that wrote as he did, *Rom. 14. 15*. was far from silencing Preachers for not using Ceremonies, or things called indifferent, or for not taking an Oath of obedience to himself. And will you prove *wiser and better* than the Apostles at the last?

18. Methinks (as I said before) even *selfishness* should make you have some regard to your surviving names! Think not that your *party* shall be the Masters of fame: Think but on all history, whether those that *suffered* in their times, as the Martyrs, and such Bishops as *Athanasius, Nazianzen, Chrysostom, &c.* have not left a sweeter name to the Church, than those by whom they suffered! Whether the name of the Nonconformists, *John Rogers*, and his followers, and *Bradford, Sanders, Glover, Hooper, Latimer, Ridley, Cranmer, &c.* be not sweeter now than *Gardiners* and *Bonnets*? And think on the *nature* of your cause and ours: When you have done your worst against Christs faithful Ministers, and sought to justify it by calling them Schismatics, *posterity* will enquire into the *Merits* of the Cause, and the *Evidence* of their words and yours: and their *Writings* at least will some of them survive when you have done your worst. And do you think that they who read such Works, as *Amesius, Hildershams, Hierons, Haynes, Balls, &c.* of old, and as *Gatakers, Vines, Anthony Burgesse, Allens, &c.* of late, will believe that they were Schismatics, or unworthy to preach repentance and faith in Christ? I have written so much against Schism my self, as that I defie malignity it self, to make posterity believe me a Schismatick. When they peruse the Declarations, Subscriptions, Oaths, and actions which we refuse, and weigh our reasons, they will judge otherwise than interest, and partiality, and malice will do at the present. The next *Sulpitium* will describe us liker *Martin* than you, and the *Fanatics* like the *Priscillianists*, and too many of your selves like *Ithacius* and *Idacius*, and their Synods of Bishops; which you may easily foresee when your *Hooker* himself in his Preface doth it by some Conformists already.

19. You take so notorious a way to tempt the people to their present suspicions of your over-much kindness to Popery, as that charity to them obligeth you to help to cure them of that uncharitable suspicion of you. And, I confess, if I would have liberty for any one sect my self, I would counsel and perswade men to take away the liberty of Religion from as *great*, and *worthy*, and *considerable* a part of the Ministers and People as I could, that the cry for *changes* and liberty might be so great, that others may be let in with them, as if it were to gratifie *them*. But it is our comfort that we have a King and Parliament, whose avernesse to
Popery,

Popery, and their Law against all such surmises, doth put them out of the peoples suspicions ! And I think you should do no less, but more than any others, to avert all unjust suspicions from your selves.

20. Is it possible that any *partiality, interest or passion* can make you think, either that the people of *England* need not as much Teaching, and Exhortation, and Ministerial help, to bring them to Repentance and Salvation, as all the qualified Ministers in the Land together are able to afford them ? or that God may not bless the labours of such men as *Burges, Allen, Norman*, and hundreds more that now are silenced, to the conversion of many hundred or thousand sinners, unto Repentance and a holy life ? And if you cannot, or dare not deny this, have you considered whether your reasons for silencing them be so weighty, as will countervail the salvation of so many Souls, and will comfort and excuse you at the bar of God ? And whether then you can justify your selves by saying, Lord, though so many Souls persisted in sin, and are damned, that might have been saved by the Ministry of these learned, grave and godly Preachers ; yet the good which we obtained by their silencing, and all their other sufferings, was greater than so many mens salvation would have amounted to.

And if deliberately you will venture on such a cause your selves, what would you wish the silenced Ministers to do ? You say it is our duty to forbear preaching when we are forbidden. But what if it prove otherwise, and that we must be judged as sacrilegious for alienating consecrated persons from Gods work ? and as guilty of the blood of all those souls that have perished by our silence and neglect ? What say you ? Will you undertake to justify us, and answer for us, and bear all the divine displeasure your selves which shall fall upon us for our obeying your silencing commands ? Are you willing to run all that danger for us ? But why do I ask you such a question, when your undertaking would but shew your greater obduracy, and neither save us nor your selves ?

If you say, that the crime is ours for not conforming ; that is to be examined by it self.

If ever *Episcopacy* had two learned and judicious defenders, it was Bishop *Bilson* and Bishop *Andrews* : let not interest now make you differ from your chiefest champions. I will add the words of one of them at large.

Bilson.

Bilson of Subjection, p. 399. saith, The election of bishops in these days belonged to the people, and not to the Prince: and though Valens by plain force placed Lucius there yet might the people lawfully reject him as no bishop, and cleave to Peter the right Pastor.

And indeed the people so rejected *Lucius*, that the boys in the street would not touch the ball any more which *Lucius's* horse feet had trod upon; and to the last suffered all the Magistrates displeasure in refusing the Pastor imposed on them (who yet perswaded them that he was Orthodox). And the error of a Magistrate taketh not away his power, as I before said, but only his aptitude to use it aright. And the Nonconformable people think that they lawfully adhere to their old known faithful Pastors, and reject unknown obtruded persons.

Pag. 236 he saith, *Princes have no right to call or confirm Preachers, but to receive such as be sent of God, and give them liberty for their preaching, and security for their persons. And if Princes refuse so to do, Gods labourers must go on forward with that which is commanded them from heaven; not by disturbing Princes from their thrones, nor invading their Realms, as your holy father doth, and defendeth he may do; but by mildly submitting themselves to the powers on earth, and meekly suffering for the defence of the truth what they shall inflict.*

How you gather out of this, or any words of ours, that Christ and his Apostles might not preach the Gospel without Cesar's delegations, and license from others, the Kings of the Countreys whither they went, I see not, except you take the word [Supreme] for superior to Christ; all which standeth neither with our assertion nor intention, but is a very pestilent and impudent sophistication of yours—Marg. Bishops may preach without Cesars leave, if they submit themselves to Cesar's sword, as the Apostles did.

To this, I pray add his two pages, p. 233, 234. to prove that Patriarchs were not erected by Christ, but by the consent of Bishops; and that Archiepiscopal and Metropolitan Dignities were the gifts of Princes; and then consider how far that Office of Presbyters, which is of Christs own instituting, is to be forsaken in obedience to the command of a Metropolitan, or any power of mans ordaining.

Pag. 226. *The charge which the Patriarchs and Bishops of England have over their flocks, proceedeth neither from Prince nor Pope, nor dependeth on the will or word of any earthly creature; therefore*
you

you do us the more wrong to say what you list of us——By supreme Governours we do not mean Moderators, Prescribers, Directors, Inventors, or Authors of these things, as you misrepresent us, but Rulers and Magistrates, bearing the sword to permit and defend that which Christ himself first appointed and ordained, and with lawful force to disturb the despisers of his will and testament. Now what inconvenience is this, if we say that Princes as publick Magistrates may give freedom, protection and assistance, to the preaching of the Word, Ministering of the Sacraments, and right using of the Keys——Doth that prove that all Ecclesiastical power and cure of Souls do proceed and depend of the Princes right?

See also Page 362.

And p. 259. As Bishops ought to discern what is truth, before they teach; so must the people discern who teacheth right before they believe.

Page 261, 262. Princes as well as others, must yield obedience to Bishops, speaking the word of God: But if they pass their Commission, and speak besides the word of God, what they list, both Prince and people may despise them.

See him further, proving that all have a *judicium discretionis*, Page 259, 260, 261, 262.

Bishop Andrews his determination against giving unfit Kings the Sacrament, and in what sense the Pastors rule their Princes, (and consequently may not obey them in the neglect of their own office), I have shewed in the decision of the *Erastian* Controversie, and need not repeat it; yea he alloweth the very Deacon to deny an unworthy King admittance to the Sacrament. And *Chrysostome* would lose his life, rather than give it to the greatest that is unworthy. How far then Christs Ministers must give over Preaching, Sacraments and all, if men command them so to do, you may hence gather by these mens judgments.

And in the conclusion, let me again remember you, that the trick of twisting your interest pretendedly with Princes, and making them believe that those that you would have to be assisted, or expelled, are more against Monarchy and Loyalty than you are, though it be an old device, and of great success, hath ever been hateful to sober men, when the falsehood hath appeared, and will but make your blot the fouler. There were

two great Philosophers in *France*, in the time of King *Francis* the first, *Castellanus* and *Bicot*. *Bicot* was a most profound interpreter of *Aristotle*, and saith *Hornius*, hath got the immortal fame of *Scaligers* testimony (*Hist. Phil.* l. 6. p. 314.) And indeed *Scaligers* words are very high in his praise, *Exercit.* 307. n. 15. *Pag.* 904. and smart against his adversaries: *Hac quidem risui sunt atque contemptui nostris Lucianis atque Diogenis Culinariis, sed non neglecta sunt a maximo Philosopho Guilielmo Bicotio, qui quidem pene solus hoc summum jus hodie taceatur in recondita Philosophia.* But *Castellanus* hated *Bicot* because he was a *Peripatetick*, The King being a great lover of learned men, heard *Castellanus* often; and when some Courtiers extolled *Bicot*, and desired the King to hear him, *Castellanus* in wrath and cunning together saith, *What do you praise an Aristotelian? And that you may know, O King, what men these Aristotelians are, they affirm that Aristocracy is better than Monarchy.* Which knockt the nail on the head, and the King would not hear *Bicot*, but *Castellanus*. *Melancthon* hath recorded the whole Story, and *Hornius* after him. These devices may do the feat for a while, and serve for a shift against not only *Aristotles* Philosophy, but more necessary Truths; but at the long running they will be out of breath, and flattery and calumny will stink.

Postscript.

LET the Reader, who hath read my Repetitions of Martins and Bicots Stories in other books, know that this was written before them all, and cast by, till mens importunity have prevailed with me to publish it.

AND

AND now we humbly lay these Petitions at your feet, and beseech you (not for our own ease, or honour, or wealth, but) for the Souls of many Hundred thousands of ignorant, sensual, impenitent sinners, that you who call your selves their Pastors, and the Fathers of the Church, will not deny them the bread of life. We beseech you for the Souls which are ready to appear before their Judg, and to receive their final doom, and are lost for ever, if they be not presently recovered ! Their lives are going ! Time will not stay while you are waiting for advantages to attain your ends ! They are posting into another world ! O let them know whither they are going before they are there ! And feed not your anger, envy, or interests, at so dear a rate, as the damnation of so many ! If you believe that if the Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost, and that men *cannot love, desire or seek* what they *know not*, deny not poor souls the means of knowledge. If you yet believe that ignorance and sin is not so common as we think, or that the silly, dry and dead discourses or *sayings over* of some broken Notes, which is the food of too many Churches, is enough to cure them ; we beseech you come out of your Palaces a while, and dwell in some Countrey-Village, and be familiar with the people, and confer with all the poor of the Parishes, as we have done, that you may not see many Hundred thousands damned by your means, and have nothing to say when it is too late, but a *non putarem*. As ever you believe there is a Heaven to be obtained, *hinder not* Souls from entering in, if you will not help them : Strive not for a title to the Keys, that you may lock the doors, and neither enter your selves, nor suffer them that would to enter. If you believe there is a Hell, have some pity on Souls, and tye not their hands who desire to save them. If you believe not the Gospel, confess it, and deal plainly with the world. If you do believe it, forbid us not to preach it, till you have made our labours needless by better supplies. We beseech you remember the price that was paid, the blood that was shed by Christ for Souls, and sell them not now for a thing of nought, and make not merchandize of them for your honour, interest, or passions. Remember that *you*, and *we*, and *they*, are ready to lye down in rottenness and dust, and our Souls to appear before our Judg ! And where then will be your wealth, and ease,

and greatness ! And how will these things appear in the review, when you shall stand in that more clear convincing light ? Fall not on the corner-stone that you should build upon, lest you be broken ; and strive not against it, lest it fall on you, and grind you to powder. Who will set the bryars and thorns against him in battel ? Will he not go through them, and burn them up together ? Remember that our God is a consuming fire. Though (as *Paul* once) you have verily thought that you ought to do many things which are contrary to the Gospel and work of the Lord Jesus, be warned in time, and do so no more. O that God would make them sensible by repentance who are truly guilty, how many thousand persons damnation is like to be charged upon them, for what they have already done in above seventeen years, hindering so many faithful Ministers of Christ to labour the saving of their Souls.

Right Reverend Lords ! though we are your *Petitioners* for the sake of poor Souls, and of the Church and Gospel, and for the sake of Christian Love and Peace, and for the sake of Christ who valueth these ; yet are we not your *flatterers*. Had we not seen in history and experience, especially in the numerous *Roman* Clergy, how far interest and self-love can blind men, and bring both Learning, Reason and pretences of Religion into their service, it would be a wonder to us, that humane nature could be guilty of your course, and that in the face of such dreadful judgments as have lately been upon us ! That when Gods displeasure had afflicted your selves (or some of you) for many years, you should come out of the fire so unrefined, as to use the Gospel and Ministers of Christ much worse than your Predecessors did before you ! and shew that you have learnt so little by all Gods judgments on you, and on the land, as to forget what God did, and what *your selves* did, while you remember only what the *Instruments* of his wrath did ! Nay, under pretence of remembering your afflictions, your wrath burneth implacably against the innocent, that never hurt you, nor had the hundredth part so great a hand in your afflictions as you had your selves. Wonderful ! that in the very time while the Plague was devouring, and souls crouding out of time into eternity, and each man a terror to another, and about a hundred thousand dead in one City, you should be a terror to your surviving brethren, and study how to stop the mouths of those that would but help to prepare poor souls for so great a change ! That
when

when such *dreadful flames* have followed such Wars and wasting Plagues, yet nothing moveth you to see so great and grievous sins, as the silencing so many hundred Ministers, and the starving so many hundred thousand souls, that never deserved evil at your hands ! That the instances of the obduration of *Pharaoh*, and the *Pbarisees*, with the consequents, make you not afraid, lest the wrath should come upon you to the uttermost, while you please not God, and are contrary to all men, forbidding Christs labourers to gather in his harvest, and to preach to the ignorant and impenitent that they might be saved ! 1 *Thess.* 2. 15. That you are no more sensible of the foretold tenor of Christs final doom on them that did not feed, cloath and visit the least of his servants ; but think that you please him by reproaching those whom he calleth his *Brethren* ; and think still that you do God service, when you do so much against his servants, and against the peoples souls ! Wonderful ! when Christ had so plainly rebuked his Disciples for striving who should be the greatest, and forbidden them to Lord it over his Heritage, and told them the necessity that they become as little children, and the servants of all ; that yet the pomp and vanities of this world, and an uncharitable mind, can make the very name of *Obedience* to your selves, seem a sufficient pretence for the lamentable dissipations and confusions of the Churches of true believers ! That ever you can preach for Loving your neighbours as your selves, and not feel the convictions and sentence of your Consciences for what you have already done ! For my own part I have little sense of any of your injuries to my self ! Nor am I unthankful for that respect of my Governours, which would have advanced me to your degree of honour. But, I must profess, if it were the last word that I should speak in the world, that I had rather be the basest scavenger, yea and suffer many deaths, than be found at the Judgment-seat of Christ, in the place, and under the guilt of those of you who have done what is done against the Gospel and Church of Christ among us in this Land.

I am not so foolish as not to know that all this talk is grievous to you, and not the way to my ease, or honour with you, nor to procure favour in your eyes : But if in such a day, and in such a case we should all be silent, and none so much as call you to repentance, nor plead the Cause of an injured Saviour, and deserted souls, we should partake of the crimes which we are lamenting ; and not only *Gildas* and *Salvianus*, and such like, but all the Prophets and Apostles would condemn us.

And if all that is here said have no other effect, than to increase your indignation and our sufferings: Judg O posterity ! Judg all disinterested impartial men, between these Reverend Lords and us ; whether the Petitions here presented to them, be selfish, or unreasonable, or such as should be rejected at so dear a rate as our lamentable divisions and Church-distractions come to ! yea Christ, whose cause and interest we plead, will certainly and shortly judge ; before whom their worldly grandeur and dignities will be insignificant, and wrathful reproaches will not prove the innocent criminal, nor justify them that condemn the just, or that will not understand the will and interest of their Lord. Even so, Come Lord Jesus, Come quickly, *Amen.*

If you ask why I write all this to *you*, and not to His Majesty and the Parliament. I answer, It is not *them*, nor any of *their Laws or Actions*, which in all this book I intend to speak against. The most pious Princes and Rulers have been most addicted to reverence the Counsels of the Bishops in the matters of Religion: All men are supposed to know more than other sorts of men in their own professions. Uncontrolled Fame impureth all our sufferings to *your* designs and wills. And I have reason to remember, that when his Majesty did graciously authorize you by his Letters Patents, to make such Alterations in the Liturgy as were necessary to the satisfaction of tender Consciences, you would make none at all, but what is now done, which maketh our burden much greater than before. And more than once his Majesty by his publick Declarations hath warranted us to be confident, that his Desires are and have been for the quiet, peace and welfare of his Subjects, upon moderate terms. And I know not any man alive that doubteth, but *if you would cordially desire it, and endeavour it*, the King and his Parliament would soon be found the healers of our wounds, and the restorers of Unity and Concord, by casting out that which hath cast out Love, and turned the people as into *Guelphes* and *Gibelines* ; and we might soon see the blessed fruits of Concord. *Amen.*

A Postscript to the Apologie for our Preaching.

Since the writing of what goeth before, I have heard so much from the most learned Accusers, of their accusations of us, as enableth me the better to know what objections to answer. And the ablest that I have met with, argueth at this rate [Mr. H. Dodwell.]

1. He confesseth that we cannot subscribe, declare and swear as is required, without stretching the words to an improper sense; and such as I think will allow (by parity of reason) almost any lying equivocation or perjury in the world. Some others of them say, If Rulers will go about by fraudulent impositions to turn us out of our Ministry, we will countermine them, and take their words in any tolerable sense to which we can subdue them. But we cannot practice that art.

2. He confesseth that we ought not to perform active obedience herein against our consciences.

3. But he saith it is Schism in us to preach as we do, because the passive obedience of *silence* is our duty. His reasons are, 1. Because a Presbyters calling is *dependent on the bishop*, and not otherwise to be exercised. 2. Because by preaching we *become Church-Rulers*, and take the Bishops Office on us; as if a man should depose the King, and take his place, because he governeth not aright, (as he conceiveth.) 3. Because without such passive obedience, no peace can be kept by any Government. 4. Because the Bishops and not we are Judges who should preach or not. 5. And *Presbyterians* are for silencing some. 6. And the hurt that followeth our silence, must be charged on the Bishops, and not on us.

So that the great crime of the *Nonconformists* is *preaching Christs Gospel when the Bishops forbid them.*

Here

Here he granteth all the following matter of fact and right.

1. That the Preachers in question (*e. g.* my self, &c.) are consecrated to God in the Sacred Ministerial Office.

2. That it is Sacriledg and soul-murder to alienate our selves.

3. That in God's ordinary way men cannot be saved without knowledg, faith and obedience.

4. Nor be brought to these but by Teaching.

5. That few of the Churches that were burnt in *London*, are rebuilt.

6. That many Parishes are so large, and the Churches so small, and the Preachers voice so low, that one of ten or twenty of the Parishioners cannot hear, if they were never so willing.

7. That many Ministers are insufficient (and the Parson of the Parish where I live, hath been suspended *ab officio* these two or three years, or at least hath not officiated.)

8. That therefore the silence of all the *Nonconformists* is like to prove the damnation of many thousand souls.

9. That if the King only forbid us preaching (and not the Bishop) we are not bound to such silence as he requireth.

10. That our Bishops are not chosen by the Presbyters of the Diocess, or the people, but by the King (whatever formality seem to contradict this.)

11. That the extent of their Diocesses is not *jure divino*.

12. That none of them is *jure divino*, the Bishop of *me*, or any other such.

13. That National Churches are but of *humane institution*.

14. That what *man instituteth*, *man* may *abrogate* or *undo*.

15. That if King or Bishop forbid me to relieve the poor in true necessity, or to feed any family, or teach them, I must not obey.

16. That the prime part of Religion is in positives, and but the second in negatives; and therefore sins of omission are the first sins.

17. That no sin must be matter of obedience to Bishops or any man.

18. That the Apostles had their power to edification, and not to destruction.

19. That in case of controversies of Faith, the Church may not judg in *partem utram libet*, but only for the truth.

20. That

20. That all Bishops power is limited, and not absolute.
 21. That when they command without power, only passive obedience is due.

22. That Bishops are not made Judges whether there shall be preaching and worshipping God or not; but only to order it, a-right, and judg by whom it shall be done.

23. That Bishops cannot dispense with the Law of God, nor humane power prevail against Divine.

24. That order is for the end and for the thing ordered, and not against it.

25. That natural morals are to be preferred *ceteris paribus*, before positives, much more before humane orders, and God will have mercy and not sacrifice.

26. That the silencing of the faithful Preachers of the Gospel greatly please the Devil; and that he is so far, of the Silencers mind.

27. He accuseth not the silenced Ministers with any false doctrine.

28. He chargeth them not with Immoralities, or a bad life, saving his supposed sin of Schism, for preaching Christs Gospel when forbidden.

29. He confesseth that *Paul* must preach, though forbidden; and that he chargeth *Timothy* before God and Angels to preach in season and out of season.

30. He confesseth that the Pastors for 300. years preached when lawful Magistrates were against it, and forbade them.

31. I acquaint him, that I my self have the Bishops ordination, the Bishop of the Diocess License not repealed, and the Kings License: and yet unless I will say, that I trust to the Bishops License, as that without which all were Schism, it is Schism still: so that it seemeth to be made necessary, not only to have it, but to believe in it, or trust it.

On the other side we grant as followeth.

1. That we must not over-value our own grace or gifts, nor undervalue other men, nor pretend that our labours are more necessary than they are.

2. We must not disobey our lawful Rulers by omission or commission,

mission, in any thing which it belongeth to their office or power to command or forbid us.

3. That if they command or forbid *without power*, that which belongeth not to their office (as that which belongeth to a mans private Trade, or self-government, or family-government, &c.) if it be not in it self evil, we should materially obey them *finis gratia*, to preserve order and reverence to their office, and that we embolden not men to disobey in other things, though formally that particular injunction be powerless of it self.

4. That if they command us that which God forbiddeth, or forbid that which God commandeth, we must patiently suffer what unjust punishment they inflict on us for not obeying them, and not resist them in their executions by force. (Though we cannot say that this hath no exceptions; as if a Bishop would ravish a woman, she may resist him to save her chastity; yet at least no resistance is lawful which deposeth the Governour, or disableth him to govern).

5. We think it not lawful to invade or take the publick Temple, or Tythes, or other maintenance of the publick Ministers, against the Kings will, or without authority.

6. We believe that lawful Rulers have power to forbid such ministers to preach in this or that place, or any where in their dominions, whose preaching is such as tendeth to do more harm than good.

7. Had we any reasonable conviction that our Ministry is unnecessary, we would obey our Rulers, though they silenced us causlessly; and would seek some other place or way of serving God.

8. In those times, places, and circumstances, which perswade us that more hurt than good will come by it if we preach, we will then and there forbear it, though it be not as an act of formal obedience, nor a desertion of our Office, or of the exercise of it at other times.

9. We judg it our duty to further the good success of the Conformable Ministers to the utmost of our power.

10. And we take Schism to be a great sin, and that which we are bound to do the best we can not only to avoid our selves, but to cure or hinder in others.

But we cannot in our present case give over the preaching of Christs Gospel for the Reasons before given.

11. We judg it a violation of the grand Law of Charity to agree

agree with the Bishops, that the people shall be damned by thousands, and content our selves, that not we, but they shall answer for it.

2. We judge it perfidiousness to violate our Ministerial Covenant with God, in which we gave up our selves to his service.

3. We judge it also heinous sacrilege, it being a holy work to which we are devoted.

4. It is an Idolatrous setting up mans will and power above and against Gods.

5. It is a preferring of pretended Order, before the thing ordered, and that which is less than sacrifice (even sin) before Mercy, yea the greatest mercy.

6. It is a pleasing of the Devil, who is the great enemy of Preaching the Gospel, and of sinners repentance and salvation; and whole instruments the hinderers of the Gospel are, we leave to consideration.

7. It is a contradicting of the prayer taught us by Christ; Pray the Lord of the harvest to send forth labourers: For we are sure he hath not sent forth supernumeraries.

8. It is a wilful running on Christs damning sentence after his premonition, *Math. 25.* by omitting greater matters than feeding, cloathing, visiting, &c.

9. It will be a burying our talent with the unprofitable servant, and denying God the service which he hath qualified us for, and all our former time hath been spent in preparing for: and so it is as a casting away our time and life.

10. It will be a wilful compliance with *Phariseism*, after the warning of their ill examples, who preferred their orders, traditions, sabbaths, and their own authority, before the good of the peoples souls and bodies.

11. It will be an encouraging compliance with Church-tyranny *in exercitio*, if we will give over Preaching as oft as Bishops forbid us, because we will not take their Oaths, and be stigmatized with their *PER*: I say, supposing this had been the case.

12. We think it will be a compliance with Church-tyranny *quo ad titulum*, being ready to prove not only that the present *Diocessans* have no true power over us (but what is given them by the King as Magistrates), but also that their frame of Government is destructive of the Churches Ministry (both Episcopacy and Presbytery)

bytery) and Discipline of Christs appointment.

This was written when we had the Kings License.

13. We are afraid of being guilty, as things now go, of mens Usurpation and injury against the King ; while we have the Kings License to preach, and they tell us not only that the King hath not so much authority to License us as they, but also that he hath less authority to silence us than they; and that it is lawful to preach when Kings unjustly forbid us, as the ancient Pastors did, but not when these Bishops forbid us.

14. In short, When we think what a work it is to damn souls by starving them, or to hinder their salvation, our hearts dread to participate in such guilt, considering, 1. It is contrary to the very nature of God, who is *Love* it self: And we find that the silencers are ready to trust in Gods Love to themselves in the hour of their extremity: And shall we think that he so little loveth the souls of men, as to desire that they should be damned, rather than saved against the will of a *Diocesan*? 2. It is contrary to the very office and design of Christ, who laid down his life a rancome for many, and came to seek and to save that which was lost, and would not cease when the Rulers forbid him to teach the people, and demanded an account of his authority, but would break even the rest of the Sabbath to save mens health, telling them, that the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath; and if Prelacy be of God, it is for the peoples salvation, and not their salvation to be sacrificed to a Prelates will. 3. It is contrary to the sanctifying-work of the Holy Ghost, who by the Gospel converteth man to God. 4. It is contrary to Christs institution of the Ministerial office, which was for mens salvation. 5. It is contrary to our duty to the Catholick Church, whose increase we must endeavour. 6. It is contrary to our daily prayers: To pray God to *have mercy upon all men*, and to deny them his mercy, and starve their souls, is gross hypocrisie. 7. It is contrary to our Baptismal-vow, in which we engaged our selves to fight under Christs banner (in the place where he should set us) against the world, the flesh and the devyl. 8. It is contrary to our due Love to our native Countrey; for whose temporal welfare even a Heathen would have dyed. 9. It is contrary to that peace of the Church which is pretended for it: For it destroyeth the necessary foundations and ends of peace. 10. And it is contrary to the very honour of the Prelates themselves, which is set in competition with things of inestimable worth: For it will
make

make the people that believe the Gospel, to take such men as (professing themselves the Fathers of the Church) do silence the faithful Preachers of it, to be grand enemies of Christ and Souls, and the Captains in the Army of the devil. 11. All good men long for the propagating of the Gospel to the Heathen and Infidel World ! And shall we then be guilty of suppressing it at home ? 12. The Papists, and all such will condemn us, who will not give over Preaching, even when King, and Law, and Bishops forbid them. And shall we incur all this guilt by ceasing for nothing, yea even now while we are licensed by the King ? We had rather be taken in the company of thieves in a pursuit, than to be found among *PER's*, and soul-murderers at judgment : *Sion* is the City of Salvation, but in *Babylon* is found the blood of souls, of whom for carnal ends they made merchandize.

The foregoing Reasons of our Accusation are sufficiently answered already.

I. Where it is said that our Calling is dependent on the Bishops ! I answer : It is yet *lis sub judice*, whether such a Prelacy be of God, we mean the *English Species* (that is, for one man to destroy a thousand, or many hundred Churches, and make them but *Parts* of one *Diocesan* Church, and without any Bishop under him, to Rule and exercise the Power of the Keys over that one Church by a Lay-Chancellor, in a secular manner, and deny the Power of the Church-Keys to all the demi-Presbyters) ?

If these *Diocesans* were of God, so is not every one that by worldly power gets possession of the place, being neither chosen by the Clergy or the people, any more than one that forcibly usurpeth the name and dignity : What maketh that man a Bishop over me any more than another man ? Had they said the King, I should have revered the answer at least (Though the *Arrians* had the same in *Constantius* and *Valens's* days) : But when they trust not to this, but to their *divine right*, what is it that is their title ? They say, *Consecration*. I answer, 1. *Consecration* is but a *Ministerial investiture* (like Marriage) of one that before had right by election : This they deny, and lay all on Consecration, and not Election. 2. But if so, then if the unjustest claimer be

Consecrated, he is our Bishop. And then the Consecrators have more power to determine who shall be Bishops than Kings and People. 3. But who be *these Consecrators*? Are they *any* Bishops whatever, or some in special above the rest? If *any*, then any wicked Bishops may make more, and undo the Church? And then, what if three Bishops consecrate one, and three another, and three another, over one Diocese? Are they all the Bishops of that Diocese? or which? 4. But the Objectors confess that Consecration doth but make one a *Bishop* without a determinate Church; but to make him the Bishop of *this or that Church*, humane application is necessary. But, 1. Where find they in Scripture a Bishop made, that was not made the Bishop of a particular Church? I believe that a Minister of Christ in general, and an Evangelist *in specie*, may be made before he is fixed to any particular Church: But not a Bishop, if Scripture must be the rule. 2. But if he be Consecrated a Bishop, and not *my Bishop*, (or any other mans) this layeth on me no obligation to obey him. 3. But they are forced at last, to resolve all their power and our duty into *Humane will* or institution. It is *Man* that must make him *my Bishop*: And this they call the application of the power! But by *what Act* is this application? Is it by *Election*? or by another *Consecration*? or how? sure they will say by Election. And doubtless some one must first *Elect* him to be a Bishop indeterminately? It's strange that men must be *Consecrated* that no men chuse. Then they chuse themselves: And then the Consecrators must Consecrate any one that will chuse himself to be a Bishop: But if not so, they make the Consecrators chusers, and therefore should not say that Election doth nothing to make him a Bishop. But who are the second determining Electors? They know not who to lay it on, nor who it is that maketh a man Bishop of these persons, and this place. One will say the Consecrators (and then they know not who these must be, and we may possibly have ten Bishops at once), another will say the Clergy (which really here chuse not); another will say the King, and they must all come to that or nothing, though they are very loth (for none of them will say, *The People*).

2. But what is the *dependance* of our calling on the Bishops (supposing them of Gods appointment)? Is it a dependance, 1. Of *Essence*, 2. For *Operation*, 3. Or for the *Order* and *Circumstances* of operation? And do they mean that we depend, 1. On the Bishops

Bishops first Ordination? 2. Or on his continued Will?

1. If our Calling (as to Authority and Obligation) did depend *in esse* on the will of the *ordainer* as such, that is, that we receive it from him (of which more elsewhere); yet doth it not follow, that the *continuance* of it dependeth on his Will, and that he may undo what he hath done. For he engageth men to God *durante vita* in a perpetual office (which maketh the Papist call it an *indelible Character*): In Ordination a Contract is made between Christ and the Minister; and till they null it that contracted it, he cannot do it that did but Ministerially contract them. A Priest may Marry man and wife, but cannot unmarry them. A Bishop may Crown and Anoint the King, but cannot depose him.

2. And if the Bishop cannot null the *esse* of our Calling, than the *operation* is not at his Will: For 1. the *Esse* is nothing but the *Potestas operandi cum obligatione*. 2. Else it were left to the Will of Bishops whether Christ should have any Ministers and Worship; and whether the Gospel should be preached, or Souls be saved.

3. But if it be only the Time, place and order of our Ministration that is left to Bishops, they have no power to forbid the *necessary* preaching of the Gospel, on pretence of ordering it: To order *operation*, is not to prohibit it: He doth not order my studies, writing, travel, building, who biddeth me study, write, travel, build no more.

4. As the Bishops of *Spain at Trent* defended the Divine right of their office against the Pope, so must we ours against the Prelates. Christ hath instituted the office of Presbyters himself; which is more generally agreed on among Christians, than that he hath instituted our Prelacy: But if Dr. *Hammond's* opinion hold true, that there were no subject-Presbyters in Scripture-times, we shall think it hard to prove that there ought to be any now: And then all Ministers must be of one order.

5. Suppose *Scotland* possessed of the Christian Religion under such Presbyters as *Coleman, Aidan, Finan, &c.* and after a Courtier perswadeth the King to call one man their Bishop, and make him be Consecrated; Are all those Churches and holy Pastors on a sudden by that act become such dependants on that Bishop, as that they must give over preaching when he bids them?

6. By your Rules men may enlarge Diocesses at their pleasure; and if the King will make all *England* one Diocess, he may put down all the Bishopricks save one, and give one man power to chuse whether Christ shall have any Gospel or souls in *England*; and so Christ must shortly be no Christ or Saviour, without the Bishops leave.

II. To the second Reason, I deny that by preaching we use any Prelatical power; the (pretended) Office of a Prelate is not to be the sole Preacher, but the Governour of Preachers. If we made our selves *Governours* of Preachers, we should assume their power. But to preach is our own work.

Obj. *You call and govern assemblies.* Ans. We govern not Diocesses nor other Presbyters; and to guide particular Assemblies in worship, was ever acknowledged the Presbyters work.

Obj. *Yes, under the Bishops government, but not without him.* Ans. To do the work of his own office without him that should govern him, could be but a disobedience against that Governour, but not a deposing him, and usurpation of his Government. If a Physician, Taylor, or Shoemaker, exercise his Calling when the King forbideth him, yea or a Schoolmaster or Minister who governs others, this is not to depose the King, and take his power, but only to disobey his power. Can you perswade all Popish Priests in *England*, that they depose the King?

III. The third Reason is as gross a fallacy, supposing that our silence is but *passive obedience*; but *passive obedience* (as it is commonly called) is but *patient suffering without resistance*. If the Bishops excommunicate us, or imprison us, or deprive us of all Ministerial maintenance, or take all our Estates, we never resist them, but endure all. But when the first part of Religion is *positive*, and the second *negative*, will any say that it is but *passive obedience* to omit all our duty if a Bishop forbid it us? Then it were but *passive obedience* to give over loving God and man, and maintaining our Families, or praying to God, or doing any good, if the Bishop forbid it us.

2. And for *keeping peace* (which you demand how it should be done) I answer you: 1. Satan keepeth possession of his Kingdom in some peace. Peaceable unholiness is the surest way to hell. 2. We are commanded, but *if it be possible, and as much as in us lieth, to live*

live peaceably with all men. But peace is first in the power of Rulers; and if they will have *no peace*, it is not in our power to procure it against their wills, but only to do our part towards it. If a Bishop should forbid all men to feed their children and servants with any wholesome food, and then say, *What peace or order can you have without such obedience?* This is but to put a scorn on the Churches when they have persecuted them, and to take away their peace, and then ask them why they will not have it.

IV. To the fourth Reason, That the *Bishop is judg who shall preach.* I answer; 1. Were the Bishops Calling justified, yet he hath not power to judg *in partem utram libet*, whether there shall be preaching or none. The Churches in *London* are burnt down; the Parishes are many so large, that one of ten or twenty cannot hear in publick. If it be in the Bishops power to judg that nine parts of *London* shall have no preaching, why may he not so judg of the other tenth part? And if he may judg that there shall be no preaching, then why not that there shall be no praying and worshipping God? And if so in *London*, why not in other places? and so whether there shall be any Gospel, Religion, or Salvation? In cases of Faith, a Council hath power only to judg truly that there is a Christ, a Resurrection, a life to come, and not to judg that there is no Christ, no Resurrection, &c. And holy practice is as necessary to our salvation, as right believing. And therefore the Bishops may judg that we shall *preach*, and *pray*, and *worship God*, but not that we shall not.

Obj. *But they are to judg who shall preach. The Gospel is not cast out, if two thousand of you be silenced. If there were not Preachers, there may be Readers, and the Liturgy.*

Ans. Let them set up such competent Teachers in a sufficient number of Churches as will tell a sober conscience that all our labours are become unnecessary, and then we shall think further of the case. But is it so in *London* now? Or can any be ignorant that it is not so?

And God useth to work according to the aptitude of means; and too many Churches in the Countreys have such Teachers as say over a few cold words as boys do their Lessons; and when experience telleth us how few are the better for them, we are afraid of being so hypocritically modest as to let souls perish for fear of seeming to undervalue your raw Lads, or scandalous ignorant Priests, and to overvalue our selves.

2. Are

2. Are the *bishops absolute Judges, or not*? If absolute, we must obey them if they command murder or idolatry. If not, what are the limits of their power? Sure it is Gods universal Law. They have no power against his commanding or forbidding word; none against him, or against the common good, and mens salvation. If Popish and other Casuists use so to limit Kings, as to say that they are Ministers of God for good; and that they have no power against the common good, and that all Laws against it are null; may we not much more say so of all our Diocesans?

You grant that they cannot command us to sin, or forbid us duty: But then either we have a *judgment of discerning* to know what is *duty* and *sin*, or not. If not, then still if they forbid us *duty*, and say it is no *duty*, or *command sin*, and say it is no sin, we must obey. But if yea, then if we prove in an error, it will be our sin: And if the Bishops prove in the error, it will be theirs. And to obey *conscience* before a bishop, is in our sense nothing but to obey God before a bishop, in doing what we judg to be his will.

V. The next reason is none to us: For if Presbyterians or any other, silence Christs Ministers causlessly, and forbid that preaching of the Gospel, which is necessary to mens salvation, we abhor it in one as well as in another.

VI. And as to the last, 1. We believe not that if Christ should ask us, Why we preach not, it would excuse us to say, The bishop forbid us; no more than if he ask us, Why did you not feed, clothe, visit me in my servants? The Reasons forementioned tell you why we think we cannot be excused.

2. But if we could, Nature and Grace incline us to do all the good we can do in the world. And if thousands were like to be drowned, if we did not help the Ship-master when he forbids us, Nature teacheth us to prefer their lives before his will. And when our first question is *Whether according to Gods ordinary operation by means, so many thousands shall be saved from ignorance, sin, and hell, or be damned?* For you to determine that they shall be damned if the Bishop will, and then come in with a second question, *Who shall answer for it?* is so horrid to us, as frightneth us from obeying the Silencers, as if we saw Satan himself perswading us to obey them.

Will you give us leave openly to tell the people where our controversy lyeth? That it is the Bishops will that they shall rather be all damned in their ignorance and sin, than taught, converted, and saved by *Nonconformists*? But they say, that it's they, and not we; shall answer for it. As if they said, *Their blood be on us*. But we are loth to yeild that you must be untaught and damned, though we were never so sure to be excused.

Whose interest or work it is, Christs or Satans, to forbid faithful Ministers to preach the Gospel, and do their office, the light of Grace, when you have all done, will tell the gracious, as the light of Nature telleth men whose interest and work it is to deny to as many their necessary food. Should you deny the necessity of either (*word or food*) still *Grace* or *Nature* would from age to age resist you. Of the two, methinks those that perswade us to stretch to conform against our consciences, that we may preach, do look more favourably towards the common good, than those that perswade us not at all to conform, but merely to give over preaching the Gospel. The very motion hath an ugly aspect; it affrights us, as perceiving the voice of an affrighting Solicitor in it. It amazeth us to think that some Scholars of great parts, and humility, and obliging carriage, dare make such a motion to so many vowed and consecrated to the Ministry, while in so many Parishes so many thousand souls are wallowing in ignorance, impiety and sensuality, and have not a Church to hear in, nor a Minister to instruct them, but must stay at home, or worse, for want of room, were they never so willing. Shall the Churchwarden on his oath present twenty, or forty, or fifty thousand in a Parish for not coming into a Church where two thousand can scarce hear the Preacher? Or shall all those thousands be idle, play or drink, without trouble and a few hundreds of them be hunted and ruined, that rather join in Gods Worship with a silenced Minister? O how easie would it be to our flesh, and how dreadful to our consciences, to forbear, and leave men to themselves! Have men nothing to accuse us of, as our intollerable crimes, but the *greatest* and *costliest* duties that ever we performed in the world. The Lord keep us all from seducing Faction, and forgive us the sin which we see, and which we see not, and cause us to pray harder for his glorious appearing, and most righteous final Judgment. *Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly. Amen.*

INTEREST *real or mistaken*, RULETH THE WORLD.

Gods Interest is the highest with all the sanctified.

I. **G**OD's Interest is the pleasing of his will in his glory, which is much in the LOVE and Concord of his servants.

II. The Interest of the Universal Church is, the pleasing and glorifying God in its unity and strength, in the same Faith, Hope, Love and Obedience to Christ the sole Universal King.

III. The Interest of particular Churches is, their pleasing and glorifying God by their union with Christ and the Church Universal, by Faith, Love and Obedience; and their holy Union between Pastors and people, and of the people among themselves.

IV. The Interest of the Kingdom is, its pleasing and glorifying God, and the welfare of the whole by a holy unity with God the Universal King, and of the Sovereign and Subjects, and of the Subjects among themselves.

V. The Interest of the King is, the pleasing and glorifying God in the foresaid welfare and just government of the Kingdom, his own salvation, and his Political strength and honour, which consisteth much in the most inseparable twist of union and interests with his united subjects.

VI. The Interest of the Pastors of the Church is, the pleasing and glorifying God in the ministerial uniting of souls to God in Christ, and among themselves, in the same holy Life, and Light, and Love, and their own salvation and consolation herein.

VII. The Interest of each particular Christian is, his pleasing and glorifying God in his holy union with Christ, and with the Church Universal; and subordinately his holy unity and concord with the Ecclesiastical and Civil Society where he liveth.

VIII. The

VIII. The true Interest of an honest Separatist and Papist (in England) (supposing them incurably such) requireth them to live quietly and peaceably in subjection to the King, and in love with others, in the concordant practice of so much of Religion (even the Laws of Nature or common Christianity) which we are all agreed in, and in such tolerated exercises of their several errors as is consistent with the common welfare, and not to exasperate others by reproaches, or striving to get into suspected power.

IX. The mistaken Interest of the Pope and Papal Clergy is, to have their own wills in ruling all the world; and to that end, to weaken and disable Kings and States by divisions, contentions, and diversions, and to draw them by deceit to a voluntary subjection, as necessary to their salvation, and to the concord of their subjects, and the Christian world; and to silence and disgrace all such as are against them.

X. The mistaken Interest of *English Papists, Quakers*, and all true incurable Separatists is, to encrease and strengthen their several parties, and if it may be to get into power, and to that end, to unite in the bond of a common Toleration, and to make the tolerated party as strong as they can; and to weaken the united Ministry and Churches; and therefore to cry down a Comprehension or Union of the sober *Conformists* and *Nonconformists*; and to desire that those Impositions which themselves account sinful, may be continued, that good may come by the evil, viz. lest the union of the rest should weaken the tolerated party, and render them inconsiderable; and to bring the established Ministry, and all that are for union with them, into contempt by reproaches.

XI. The true Interest of a meer *Nonconformist* requireth him, to commit no known sin on pretence of obedience, unity, or peace; nor forsake his Ministry, whatever he suffer for it; but to live in loyalty, peace, and patience, and in love and communion with the Parochial Churches, and all Christians, so far as they are agreed.

XII. The true Interest of a *Conformist* requireth him, to use all lawful means to procure as comprehensive a Union and Concord of all sound and faithful Ministers and Christians as they are capable of, and to bear with tolerable differences; to live in peace among themselves, and by Ministerial skill, fidelity, dili-

diligence, and holy living, and by condescending humility and love to all men, to win Dissenters, to edifie and unite the people, and so to advance the true honour of the Ministry, and to encrease and corroborate the Church.

Octob. 27. 1675.

R. B.

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FINIS.

Richard Barters ANSWER

TO

Dr. EDWARD STILLINGFLEET's

CHARGE of SEPARATION:

Containing,

- I. Some *Queries* necessary for the understanding of his *Accusation*.
- II. A Reply to his Letter which denyeth a Solution.
- III. An Answer to his Printed Sermon.

Humbly tendred, I. To Himself; II. To the Right Honourable the Lord Mayor and the Court of Aldermen, III. To the Readers of his *Accusation*: the *Forum* where we are *Accused*.

Acts 15. 28. *It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things.* Rom. 14. 1. 17, 18. *Him that is weak in the Faith receive, but not to doubtful Disputations. For the Kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. For he that in these things serveth Christ, is acceptable to God, and approved of men.*

Phil. 3. 16. *Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same Rule, let us mind the same things.—15. If in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.*

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Wm S W B R

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THE P R E F A C E.

Readers,

- I. **I**F you would be truly informed of the Case of the Nonconformists, and the meaning of this Defence, you must know
 1. That the meer Nonconformists of this age take not up their Judgment in trust from any party of men, and therefore take not themselves obliged to be for or against any thing, because men were so that were called Nonconformists heretofore : As the Scripture is their Rule and objective Religion, so they reverence the judgment of the Primitive Church above the judgment of any party; And indeed are so far against Sects and Parties as such, as that their judgment is that the Church will never be well restored to desirable Concord, till our Union be Catholick, upon the terms that Christ appointed and which all good Christians have agreed in, and may agree in.
 2. That what the meer Nonconformists of this age desired for Concord and Reformation, as to the old Liturgy and Conformity, is best known by their common Proposals 1660, all the Ministers of London being by Mr. Calamy, Mr. Alh and Dr. Reynolds, invited to Sion-Colledg freely to give their judgments : who offered nothing for Church-Government but Bishop Usher's Primitive form, and nothing for Worship but the Reforming of the Liturgy, and the free use of additional formes : Their exceptions against passages in the Liturgy being not thought absolutely necessary to Communion. And it must be remembred that they offered then, 1. A Defence of those Exceptions, 2. A Reformed Liturgy or Additions, 3. A Petition for Peace and preventing Schism, to the Bishops, which they never answered to this day, that we know of.
 3. You must know that the Change of the Liturgy on pretense